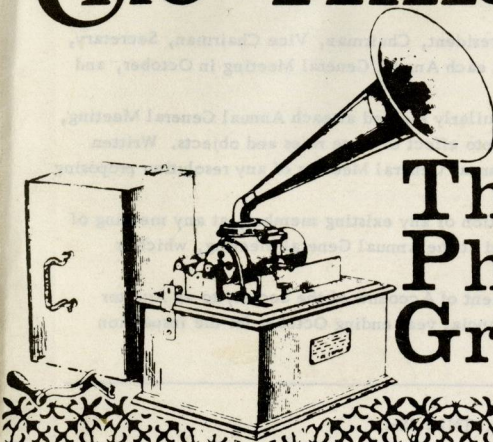


The Hillandale News

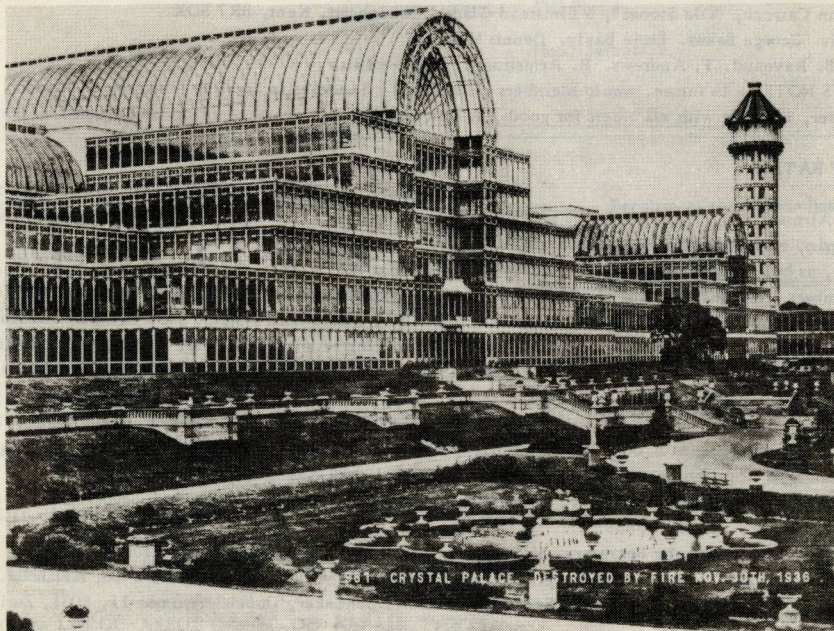


The official journal of the
**The City of London
Phonograph and
Gramophone Society**

inaugurated 1919

No. 87

DECEMBER 1975



(Photograph loaned by G. Frow)

SOCIETY RULES

1. That the Society shall be called THE CITY OF LONDON PHONOGRAPH AND GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY. The objects shall be the social intercourse of its members, as well as the production of apparatus, as well as its application.
2. That the Officers of the Society shall consist of a President, Vice-President, Financial Treasurer and Meeting Secretary, who shall be elected annually and who shall be ex-officio members of the Committee.
3. That the management of the Society be vested in a Committee of five members, and with power to co-opt, and that its duties shall be the carrying out of the objects of the Society and that notice must be given to the Secretary one clear month before a meeting to amend these rules.
4. The new members (ladies or gentlemen) may be elected on the nomination of the Society on the payment of an annual subscription to be approved by the Committee renewable twelve calendar months thereafter.
5. The Financial Treasurer shall, once in every year, submit a statement of accounts to the Society and shall furnish a Balance Sheet for the year to the members at each Annual General Meeting.

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U.K.	£2.25 per year	U.S.A. and Canada	\$6.00 Surface Mail
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MEETINGS are held at the "John Snow" Public House, Broadwick Street, Soho, London, W.1, on the first MONDAY of every month commencing at 7.00 p.m. In addition, regular meetings are held at the following centres :

HEREFORD Details from the Secretary, D. G. Watson, [redacted] Tupsley, Hereford.

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MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE that all money should now be sent to our TREASURER, B.A. Williamson, [redacted]

Valley Road, Liverpool, L15 1LA.

THE EDITOR'S LAMENT

My original intention was to present you with a tear-stained peroration regarding the financial affairs of the Society. On reflection I concluded that this was preaching to the converted as you all know how the price of everything has escalated beyond belief - in particular the so-called luxury items such as paper and ink.

Already reeling with this problem, a further blow has been added by the astronomical rise in postal charges.

As you will know, our Society spread throughout the globe - exists and is held together basically by our magazine "The Hill and Dale News". In many cases it is the only form of communication we have with one another, so it is with this in mind and it was decided at our last A.G.M. that in order to continue as a Society we must raise our subscriptions to :

U.K.	£2.25
U.S.A. and Canada	\$6.00 Surface Mail
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Australia, New Zealand and Japan	£3.25

This will guarantee the continuation of six free issues of the Hill & Dale News annually and a regular meeting at the "John Snow" Public House, Broadwick Street, Soho, W.1, commencing at 7 p.m. on the first Monday of each month throughout the year.

All visitors from Great Britain and abroad are always most welcome.

Bill Brott,

Hon. Secretary.

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months. WHICH 12 MONTHS?

FROM WHEN TO WHEN?

For answer, see page 414.

I have just seen the TV show "Upstairs, Downstairs", in which for the umpteenth time Major Bellamy played his HMV Model 6 table grand (circa 1920, with a c. 1930 soundbox) with the doors firmly closed. 'Twere ever thus in this particular tale of life in the early 1920s, and this magical machine always managed nevertheless to play at full volume. Of course you can't expect the electronic technicians in a television studio to understand so simple a mechanism, but you'd think they might notice the lack of noise when the doors are shut and the gramophone is playing. (And why is it never allowed to do so? When acoustic gramophones appear on television, apart from often being chronologically suspect, they always seem to be miming to a tape recorder). Then there was the HMV 103 which appeared in BBC's 'The Unpleasantness at the Bellona Club'; it was remarked on in the plot as being brand new, and yet it had already acquired an outsize Garrard winder in place of the original.

Well, it doesn't really matter of course, and I suppose it is my own fault for filling my brain with useless specialised knowledge. Perhaps I shall cease to collect such information now that others join in the hunt, and the prey becomes less exclusive. Certainly, it seems that whereas ten or even five years ago it was the acquisition of an Edison phonograph or a horn gramophone that led many people to join this Society and start a collection, now it is often the long-despised inter-war table grand that sparks off the novice's enthusiasm. That was how I started ten years ago (with the Vesper at 25/- near Victoria and a battered 104 from old George Russell at the Gramophone Exchange - 'You can have it for a Pound, Sir' -) but then, I always was eccentric.

As a Society, we should not lose sight of our beginnings and our original intention of fostering the Edison phonograph, but all acoustic talking machines must now be given their due, when they have been obsolete for a generation and more. True, you could still buy a 102 portable from EMI fifteen years ago, but it would have been manufactured several years previously to a design that had changed little since 1931. Incidentally, the original 1931 version of the 102 had a most ingenious automatic brake operated by a cam on an extension of the intermediate wheel arbor: can anyone provide me with one of these brakes, to restore a machine that some clever so-and-so has modified?

Spending a few days at my country place 'Gramophone Towers' in the West of England, I was attempting to tune in to the West Regional programme from Plymouth on my new 'Gecophone' wireless receiver, when my eye alighted on the current issue of The British Broadcasting Company's periodical RADIO TIMES, in which some loutish journalistic hack had referred to the voice of Mr Gladstone talking to Mr Edison on a phonograph cylinder message as "sounding windy, very upper-crust and like an extrovert High Church bishop." Now, in patriotic sentiment I yield to no one and have no brief for the radical boulder Gladstone; like Lady Bracknell whom we knew slightly for a time, and who was occasionally unwise enough to have Liberals to dine, I would forbid the servants to allow him near the house. But fair play is only fair play, and I have telegraphed Mr John Reith about this sort of thing being printed in his Company's journal. I may also have a question asked in the House. Much as I dislike the man, I have no doubt but that Mr Gladstone was addressing the phonograph machine with as much clarity as he could muster, so that Mr Edison could hear him all that way away. Mr Gladstone was also ripe of years, and any windiness could well have been occasioned by his not wearing a chest protector on a chilly day. Upper crust? Well, he went to Eton of course as becomes every Statesman, Tory or Liberal, and as for the last part of this insulting piece of journalism, it happens that I enjoy the friendship of a number of extrovert High Church bishops, who by the very direction they follow must be more extrovert than Evangelical bishops, and certainly Gladstone, who despite his radical tendencies, was a pillar of sobriety if he may be judged from several likenesses I have seen of him. Her late Majesty, under whom I had the honour to serve, and if I may say, not without distinction, complained on one occasion that Gladstone had addressed Her as if She were a public meeting, and for all the fellow's faults, it ill-becomes any paid clerk of The British Broadcasting Company to use such intemperate language, even about a Liberal.

As a boy, the family home was not far from the Crystal Palace, in South London, and not being a musical family, I was involved only so far as visiting the annual Christmas Circus, and the gigantic firework displays by Brock's, famous for their great set-pieces; the King and Queen, the Fleet at Spithead, manually operated boxing couples, and the like. But the Crystal Palace melted from South London in an enormous blaze on November 30th 1936, the size of

which Londoners had never seen before, but would be exceeded during the blitzes on London four years later. As a building it looked like an enormous garden glass-house, and was probably the largest all-glass structure ever built; designed by Paxton it had originally stood in Hyde Park at the top of Exhibition Road, Kensington, and was built to house the Great Exhibition of 1851. What has all this to do with music, records, gramophones and phonographs, you may well ask, but a brief survey of this unique building will, I hope, indicate that it was a great musical centre for 80 years, and certainly some connection with recording.

In its earlier days, after its removal to Sydenham, it was as much a focal point of London's musical life as the Queen's and other Halls, and the orchestral concerts were renowned; there was, for instance, the Crystal Palace Saturday Orchestra with 44 seasons under August Manns (later Sir August Manns 1825-1907) until 1900. Members of that orchestra who can be found as record soloists include E. Augarde (clarinet), Eli R. Hudson (flute), and E. Dubrucq (bassoon) and the specialist would point out many more. Dubrucq lived a few doors from our house, and I went to school with his son, who was later killed at Dunkirk. On the lighter side were band concerts, not only by the Crystal Palace Band, but by famous regimental and concert bands, and included several visits by the Sousa Band. The National Brass Band Festival under J. Henry Iles was held there for years until the building was destroyed, and older residents remembered the procedure of judging, the committee being enclosed in a tent. Edison Bell often secured the rights to issue the recording of the annual Test Piece, though not always, and records of the last four years of the Massed Bands at the conclusion of the Festival were issued on H.M.V., and many are beautifully resonant. The Crystal Palace Band, in which August Manns had started on the clarinet, may be found on older labels.

It is oratorio that is associated more than anything else with the Crystal Palace, and oratorio on as large a scale as the great auditorium would hold. It was oratorio too that was recorded from the Press Gallery during the Handel Festival of 1888 when THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS depicted a recording machine and cylinders, and it has been said that "Israel in Egypt" was then recorded 'complete', though no trace of this has ever been reported. It was probably no coincidence that Edison's agent, Col. Gouraud, had his London home only a mile from the Crystal Palace on the heights of Upper Norwood, where he entertained the singers from concerts there, and doubtless enticed them to record a trifle for him there. Years later, three records of the 1926 Handel

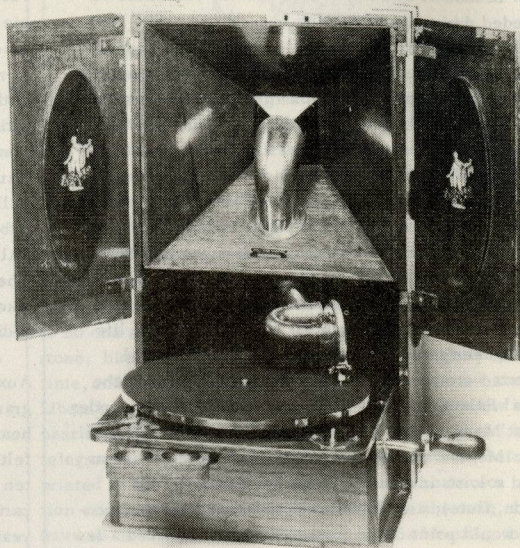
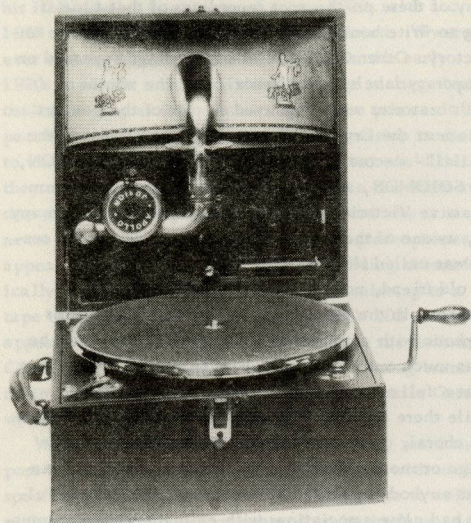
Festival under Sir Henry Wood were issued on the Columbia label (L 1768/9 and D 1550), and I think these included Lilian Stiles-Allen as soloist, but the quality of so many of these on-the-spot recordings of that time is nothing to write home about; the starts and breaks are unsatisfactory. Other Crystal Palace recordings appeared on contemporary labels. I well recall that the names of Handel's oratorios were displayed as part of the concert hall frieze at the Crystal Palace - as they still are at the Albert Hall - decorated panels with JEPHTHA, SAMSON, SAUL, SOLOMON, and so on, encircling the auditorium. The massive Victorian organ was described, as were many like it, as one of the best in the country, and its last custodian was called Holloway.

An old friend, now deceased, used to talk of the Auxetophone in the grounds of the Crystal Palace, this gramophone with compressed air magnification could be heard as much out of the grounds as in them. I have long felt that a full musical history of the place should be written while there are still those with memories, or who took part in choral, orchestral or band concerts there, forty years ago or more. Nearly every international musician who was anybody appeared at concerts at the Crystal Palace: it had close associations with eminent Victorian musicians, Santley, Sims Reeves and Sullivan, to quote three; Sir George Grove was its first General Secretary, and his Dictionary of Music and Musicians is his lasting memorial. Under Grove as Secretary and Manns as Musical Director, music flourished there and Grove and Sullivan travelled to Vienna together to rescue much of Schubert's music.

The great part of books already written about the Palace stress its 1851 associations rather than its post-Exhibition musical activities, and a detailed modern work about this South London Concert Hall is badly needed, with a good chapter or two on its contributions to recorded music up to 1936. This part might well be compiled by our Society members.

Cover photograph of Crystal Palace by courtesy of G. Frow.

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The illustration shows two Apollo portable models, from the house of Craes and Stavridi. The one on the right is made in teak with brass-bound corners, and is a most ingenious design. When not in use, the projecting base, containing a typical little Swiss double-spring motor, folds back into the cabinet; the sound reflector swings forward to let the turntable section pass, and then clips back over it. When the doors are closed, the outfit becomes a neat rectangular wooden box.

The use of teak, usually brass-bound, is often found in 'tropical' models, both of portable gramophones and of cameras, but the advertisement for the Apollo which appears in the 1921 talking machine press make no suggestion that the machine was intended for any particular clime. Decca offered a teak tropical model in their catalogues, and even HMV produced a teak version of the 101 (112), although I have never seen it mentioned in their English catalogues. (An example is on display in the Royal Scottish Museum in Edinburgh).

Apart from sheer ingenuity and the delight it affords to latter-day collectors, this machine could not have offered very serious competition to the ubiquitous Decca; the one on the left is obviously later (I have no date for it), and is in the normal leathercloth covering. When closed it is practically indistinguishable from the Barnett Samuel product, but internally, the pale wooden reflector with its transfer decoration offers some distinction of appearance if not of acoustics.

.....

ANDY'S SNIPPETS

Presented by Frank Andrews.

APRIL 1915.

CHRISTIE'S - COWEN - COLUMBIA

Christie's Sale-Rooms, in their time, have seen some wonderful, weird and worthwhile treasures pass, but we doubt whether anything more out of the way than the sale of autographed records has been transacted from this great treasure house.

Such a sale, however, will take place on April 15th, when there will be an auction of Columbia Records of the famous recruiting song, "Fall In".

Each disc has been signed by the Composer, Sir Frederick Cowen, and the proceeds of the sale will be devoted to the funds of the British Red Cross Society.

(From "Talking Machine News").

Back at Chipstead for this meeting, Goodwin Ive showed us some slides of the Schenker collection which he had been to see in Zurich. Among the machines we saw was the rare Edison Bell four-minute 'Homestead' phonograph, as well as several old favourites like HMV 109s and 157s. Goodwin's ebullient presentation, combined with comments from the audience, made this a most enjoyable evening. Rumours have apparently been circulating that he bought the entire collection for a vast sum of money, but although it is indeed for sale, one gathers the price required is somewhat in excess of normal market rates.

Meetings are held on the first Friday in each month at the Cricket Club Pavilion, Chipstead, Surrey, and all members are welcome.

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"ANOTHER IMAGINARY CONVERSATION AT A RECORD BAZAAR" ----

by FRANK ANDREWS

MY SECOND MEETING WITH ARCHIMEDES GREENHORN

"Hello, there, fellow member!"

"Oh, it's you," I replied, recognising my acquaintance of the previous record bazaar. "Am I to assume you have joined the City of London Society?"

"That's right, and I see by the Hillandale News that you made an article out of our conversation when we last met, besides writing about other matters."

"Yes, I keep busy. I thought the things we spoke of would prove interesting to those new to our hobby, and perhaps clarify some points for others. But, already, some of the things I have written about have been invalidated by recent research and newly acquired information, so Mr. er-er-er?..."

"Greenhorn", the new member volunteered, "Archimedes Greenhorn, generally called Archie".

I quickly drew a handkerchief from my pocket, for my facial muscles had begun to twitch and I needed to disguise the fact, so I blew my nose.

"Are you okay, Mr. Andrews?" Archie enquired.

Throttling back an almost uncontrollable desire to call out to all and sundry, "Listen here, everyone, here is a person new to record collecting and, would you believe it, his name is Archimedes Greenhorn?", I blew my nose once again, put my handkerchief away, and as calmly and collectedly as I could, answered, "Quite alright, thank you".

We took seats by the tea-bar.

"I was about to tell you, Archie", I resumed, "that some items have cropped up since we last met which somewhat modify certain details which I gave you regarding the origins of the Gramophone and other disc records, so, to use an old, tired and worn cliché, 'just for the record', I'll tell you what's new with me."

"Good. Let me hear it, but where do you acquire all your information?"

"Oh, I cannot go into that", I said, "but I will tell you that, as far as I am able, I try to avoid the researches of others and go to the sources of information myself. Unfortunately there are a number of matters appertaining to the U.S.A. which I would like to research, but this is impossible, and the works already published by Americans have proved either unreliable, indefinite or simply do not mention at all the information I am after, which is all very frustrating. But back to the new information."

"At our last meeting I opined that the 5" diameter 'E. Berliner Gramophone' or 'Grammophon' discs might not have appeared before 1890. I have now come across the following letter which refutes this opinion. It was written by Alfred Lomax, who is practically unknown and unsung in the annals of the British talking machine trade, but who was one of the very early pioneers who tried to place the talking machine into the hands of the public as their own private property, never mind your J.E. Hough's and your John Nottingham's being called the 'Father of the Trade'. Lomax was active before 1890 but this letter, of which I speak, was written to the editor of the 'Sound Wave & Talking Machine Record' many years later, in 1909, when Lomax was in charge of the Manchester branch of the Edison Bell business, and it was in praise and slight criticism of their 'Handbook No. 2'. In it he writes, '..... still my object is not criticism, but rather praise. I will, however, refer just to one, on page 65, sixth line; words "in the nineties" would better read, "in the later eighties". I have a Berliner disc of date May 15, 1888, made ready for public sale, and I handled and sold such discs and machines in 1889. They were commonly stamped 'Gramophone', but the word 'Grammophon' was also used. (Lomax should have put 'Grammophon' - F.A.). But this country always used the former. The disc I have is "Gramophone". However this is but by the way'. Lomax then goes on to speak

of other matters."

"Do you give any credence to that letter then, Mr. Andrews?" I was asked.

"Please call me Frank," I said, and continued, "Yes, I do, and for a number of reasons. I know a great deal about Lomax and know that he had an intimate knowledge of the Talking Machine trade through his own activities which went back over twenty years before he wrote this letter, at which time he was still very active. He must have been correct when he said that he was selling discs and Gramophones in 1889, because if he had not known this for sure, in his own mind, there would have been no point in him taking pen to paper to correct the Sound Wave's Handbook on a matter with which he was very familiar."

"There is also the dated record", interpolated Archie.

"Ah, yes," I agreed, "but that worries me a little".

"How come?"

"Well, although in my own mind I can go along with 1889, and perhaps even late 1888, May 15th 1888 is a little too early for me to take. I think Lomax was giving the date of Emil Berliner's patent!"

"If you consider Lomax a reliable source of information, why do you doubt his date as being the actual date of the record?"

"He says it was produced for public sale. Now, according to American reportage, Berliner had not perfected his acid etching technique of procuring a matrix until March 1888, and he did not give his public demonstration to the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia until May 16th, 1888, where Berliner declared it was possible to make as many copies as desired from his acid etched zinc masters. The records he demonstrated had been made in his laboratories in Washington; therefore it is just possible that examples of his discs were on sale, or available, if only as zinc masters, as early as May 1888. And taking into account that the Graphophone now had its cardboard based wax cylinders, and Edison had brought out the solid wax cylinder, there was a revival of interest in talking machines, (the tin-foil phonograph having failed as a commercial proposition), so, I suppose, it was just within the bounds of possibility that any Englishman who showed enough interest and determination to acquire examples of the new-fangled discs, could have been successful in so doing."

"There you are then. I cannot understand why you cannot accept that possibility."

"It is extending the bounds of probability very wide, you must agree?"

"Could not the disc Lomax had have been made in Germany? Berliner had his family there, with a brother in the telephone manufacturing business."

"How did you know that?" I asked, surprised.

"I can read, you know", responded Archie. I am sure he wanted to add "Big Head!"

"It's true that the tin foil phonograph was soon copied in the U.K. once the machine had seen the light of day in the U.S.A.", I mused, "so I suppose the instructions for manufacturing the Gramophone and its disc records could soon have been over on this side of the Atlantic. After all the Letters Patent had been granted in Europe in 1887 and 1888. However we are now embarked on the 'sea of speculation', which has become a bugbear and a hindrance to proper research, because, with the passage of time, many speculations, half-truths, and mistakenly remembered 'facts', have become the 'truth'."

"What date do you now give then, as the earliest at which disc records were on sale in the U.K.?"

"With all due respect to Alfred Lomax, and until corroborative evidence is forthcoming in his support, I now plump for the vague date of 'early 1889' as the most likely time when the disc record, as a commodity, made its first appearance."

"Where does Kammer and Reinhardt fit into the picture now then?"

"I cannot say exactly. Berliner's biographer says that they received a licence from him when he visited Germany in late 1889, but no details were given. Which brings me to another fresh piece of information which I have picked up, concerning the 'Waltershausen Cross', the trade mark on some of these early discs. You may remember that I said this mark did not appear on all the discs seen so far, and this raises the question of whether they were, or were not, all manufactured by the same firm."

"Well, were they or weren't they?"

"The latest information would lead us to believe that there were at least two manufacturers of the discs in Germany. I heard, through the Editor of The Talking Machine Review, Ernie Bayly, that a letter of Emil Berliner shows that a German enterprise called 'Rheinische Gummi und Celluloid Werke' of Neckaran, Mannheim, had made 25,000 discs for the firm of Kammer und Reinhardt, in Waltershausen, but the interesting thing about this is that the initials displayed within the open areas of the Waltershausen trade mark are not the initials of the Mannheim business!"

"If those 25,000 discs were only distributed throughout

five European countries, that would mean an average of 5,000 to each," observed Archie. "That would hardly be sufficient, over four or five years, to satisfy demand, would it?"

"No one seems to know how strong the market was for the primitive gramophone, but it was on sale here for at least six years and 25,000 for the whole of Europe would be much too low. It certainly seems as if there was at least one other pressing plant at work, the one which used the Waltershausen Cross."

"Why all this interest in the early Gramophone? It was only a toy was it not?"

"It was a toy, but it was not a child's toy. It was a toy in the sense that it served no useful function, unlike the phonograph and the graphophone, whose inventors and manufacturers intended their machines to be of use as an aid to commerce, as dictaphones. The gramophone was intended to be played with, but it was no child's toy, not for the working man anyway, seeing that it cost two weeks' wages to buy at two guineas a time. The poorer paid, if they wanted to hear the Gramophone, would pay a penny to a showman, who would no doubt have had the machine with the globe attachment which allowed a number of hearing tubes to be connected, thus allowing a small number of persons to 'listen in' simultaneously. If one studies the known list of recordings, one soon discovers that, although it is true that a certain number of the records were of interest to children, quite a fair proportion were of material much more suited to adult tastes."

"Well, how many manufacturers have you now for the Berliner discs? Is it four?"

"No, five."

"Five! Let me see if I can identify them. The Mannheim firm and almost certainly another in Waltershausen, that's two, then Deutsche Grammophon in Hanover with the later 7 inch discs, and the Berliner Gramophone Company in the U.S.A. You are not counting Berliner's laboratory in Washington as the fifth, are you?"

"No."

"Then I cannot think who was the other producer!"

"No? Well, I haven't told you about them, that's why! The fifth maker was the 'E. Berliner, Montreal' company in Canada, which company, according to Edward B. Moogk in his book, 'Roll Back The Years', published by The National Library of Canada, (which is a history of the talking machine trade and industry in Canada), began pressing 7 inch diameter Berliner discs in January, 1900, from matrices recorded in the U.S.A., Britain, France and Germany."

"And these would have been genuine Gramophone records, made by the acid etching technique, would they not?"

"Yes. The Bell/Tainter patent for wax incising recordings was still valid."

Archimedes Greenhorn looked at his watch.

"Time is slipping by and I will soon have to be on my way. Have you anything else of interest to tell me?"

"Yes. You may recall that I said that the Bell/Tainter patent for the wax incising method having expired in 1900, the technique had become 'public property' and that, from then on, until the advent of master tape recording, practically the whole of the industry used a wax cutting method for recording? Well, my remarks should have been qualified by explaining that the situation in North America was somewhat different to that obtaining in Europe."

"Oh! What happened there then? This won't take long, will it?"

"I'll be as brief as possible, although it is a little involved, and I have not verified some of the details yet. But, according to my good friend, Bob Foote, in the U.S.A., he tells me that the life of Letters Patent in the U.S.A. was 17 years at the time the Bell/Tainter patents were granted. Here, they were for 14 years, so on the face of it, there was a further life of three years on the Bell/Tainter wax cutting patent in America after it had expired here. There is a complication though, because I have read somewhere that a ruling of the U.S.A. Patent Office states that where equivalent overseas patents expired, the U.S.A. patent expired at the same time. So I am left in a quandary as to whether or not the Bell/Tainter patent had expired in the U.S.A., when the Joseph Jones patent was granted in December, 1901."

"What was the Jones patent for?"

"I have never seen a copy of its specifications, but apparently it was for a cutting into wax of a groove of constant depth and a vibratory lateral cut which registered the sounds being recorded. What was new or novel in this new patent I have no idea. The Bell/Tainter patent, as far as I can judge, never qualified what type of recording was intended; it seemed to cover any kind of recording made by cutting into wax or wax like substances. However the Joseph W. Jones specification was granted a patent, and it was immediately bought up by the American Graphophone Company, the manufacturers of Columbia products. It is said of Jones, that he had been employed in Emil Berliner's laboratories in Washington, and it was there that he had observed Berliner and his business associate, Eldridge R. Johnson, experimenting with wax recordings. And it is said of Johnson and Berliner, that they never applied for patents because they felt that the Bell/Tainter patent prevented any chance of them obtaining any patent."

"So the American Graphophone Company retained a monopoly for wax recording when they bought the Jones

patent?"

"Only for disc records, the vertical cut, used on phonographic cylinders must have become public property in the U.S.A. either in 1900 or 1903, according to when the Bell/Tainter patent expired."

"I suppose the Hones Patent expired in 1918 then?"

"Ah, well, did it? For you see Eldridge R. Johnson did eventually apply for a wax cutting patent, similar to the Jones patent, and although it was granted in 1908, it was not until 1911, March, that the United States Circuit Court for the Southern District of New York, held that Eldridge R. Johnson was the first 'to invent the process of producing sound records by cutting upon a tablet of suitable material, by means of lateral vibrations of the stylus, a record groove of substantially uniform depth having lateral undulations corresponding to sound waves'. Not only was the validity of Johnson's 1908 patent upheld, but it was also declared that all disc records then in manufacture were in infringement of the Johnson patent unless manufactured by the Victor Talking Machine Coy. or its licensees. What effect this had on the Jones patent of 1901, I have no idea, nor what was the ensuing litigation that followed upon the Court's ruling; I have mentioned this to show you that the North American scene took a quite different course to that in Europe, owing to the two new patents that were granted there. The overall effect was to keep the industry in North America under the control of the 'Big Three' companies, who operated on cross licensing arrangements, the Edison, Columbia and Victor/Berliner enterprises."

"The Johnson patent would not have expired until 1925 then? Is that the reason why electrically operated recording methods were so long in arriving?"

"I have no idea," I said.

"Which was the first company to use wax recording for discs in the U.S.A.?" asked Archie.

"I thought you had to depart," I commented. "I'll deal with that one next time, if we should meet again, not that I am sure that I know the answer."

"Yes, I must be off. Cheerio, then - and thanks, Frank."

"So long."

.....

Member Frank Andrews does not claim 100% accuracy for the "statements of fact" included in his article. This "conversation", and the one published earlier, are intended to raise questions, and hopefully to produce answers, about many of the unsolved mysteries of the early days of the new talking machine trade and

industry. Readers are invited to send in any comments and corrections which will aid in producing a more accurate picture of the progress of events than we have at present. He here wishes to acknowledge his grateful thanks to member Bob Foote, of Rockville, Maryland, U.S.A. for his useful U.S.A. Patents Office information.

THE COLUMBIA RECORDS APPEALS

The second volume to deal with Columbia disc records, to be published by the Oakwood Press, is now on its way to completion in preparation for the printers. As mentioned before, this work is to encompass a listing of the 12" double sided records issued as (1) Columbia Double Face Records, (2), Rena Double Face Records, (3) Columbia-Rena Records, (4) Columbia Records, and (5) Columbias; the latter we are now, hopefully, going to be able to carry right through to the end of the "DX" prefixed series. Additionally we are including all early "celebrity" recordings, on all sizes, single and double sided, which are not included in the present "Columbia" volume on sale.

As a result of appeals made over the past few months, the following catalogue numbers can now be eliminated from pages 342 and 343 of recent Hillandale News. These numbers are in addition to those eliminations already published on page 366 of August 1975's issue.

Reading down the lists on pp. 342/3, eliminate Nos. 9059, 9156, 9138, 9208, 9750, 9453, 9466 and 9107. We still require the matrices of the records with the remaining catalogue numbers.

Our initial appeal was for matrices from 98 discs. As a result from member's submissions and from readers of fellow member Ernie Bayly's "Talking Machine Review", this total has now been reduced to 74 discs. Cannot anyone provide matrix information about those remaining? What about the Casadesus set of discs? Or Henry Hall's disc, - and the "Marouf" Bellet Music - I expect many of you have the Georges Thill items from this work, but we do not need his matrices!

Well now, what about the earlier numbers in this series which began on the Rena Double Face Records, manufactured (?) by the Rena Manufacturing Co. Ltd. and then by the Columbia Phonograph Coy. Gen'L., who later changed the style to Columbia-Rena Record and then to Columbia Record? We have not asked for the matrices from these yet - but we want them!! The numbering begins at 99 and ends at 999, a total of 1,001 discs. We have less than half the matrix numbers from these, leaving too many "Blank Entries" to list here. All submitted matrix numbers will be

welcome, but I am afraid I cannot acknowledge your submissions individually.

ELECTRICAL RE-RECORDINGS

With reference to the appeal for the matrices of the electrical re-recordings replacing former acoustic recordings, made on page 366 of August, 1975's H & D News, the following catalogue numbers can now be eliminated from the list, reading downwards: Nos. 117R, 200R, 582R, 244R, 987R.

For information received, may I thank, among others, Messrs. Cockerton, Frow, Hines, James, Lewis, Munday, Sampson, Upton and Wall of the home country; Messrs. Brookes, Bryant, Charosh, Raymond Jnr. and Yale University Library, all of the U.S.A., and Mr. Hannah in Australia.

All further information to me, please, Frank Andrews, [REDACTED] Neasden, N.W.10, AH0, England.

BRITISH MUSIC HALL ON RECORD

by PHIL HOBSON

PERCY HONRI (1874 - ?)

Born near Banbury, his first stage appearances were with his father and mother, as 'The Royal Thompson Trio'. When he went solo, he became known as an expert instrumentalist, principally on the concertina, retiring in 1944. I know of recordings for G&T, ZONO, WINNER, REGAL-ZONO and EDISON BELL cyls.

TOM E. HUGHES (? - ?)

From Newcastle-on-Tyne, came to London in 1898 and in the following years specialised in songs of the 'Broken-down Swell' type - his billing was 'The Rag-Bag of Vanity'. Although never, I think, a top star, his songs were quite well-known and included "On the Pier", "I wonder what it feels like to be poor?" and the most famous "Can London do without me?" which he recorded for EDISON 4 min. cyls. (the only record he made?).

ALEC HURLEY (? - 1913)

Billed as 'The Coster King', he was a real cockney (unlike ALBERT CHEVALIER) and although his name lives today only because he was the second husband of MARIE LLOYD, in his time he was a big star with songs like "Arry" (G&T). As well as other recordings for G&T, I am told that he was also on STERLING cyls. - has anyone details?

NELSON JACKSON (1870 - 1951)

An 'Entertainer at the Piano', who wrote a lot of his own material. Born in Liverpool, made his start there in 1891, London two years later. Popular for many years. He can be heard in songs and monologues on WINNER and THE GRAM. CO.

HILDA JACOBSEN (? - ?)

A singer of mainly sentimental songs, although she recorded that early Ragtime favourite "Red Wing" (ZONO). Besides this, I know of only two others (2 and 4 min. EDISON cyls.). Any details of her career or further recordings would be welcome.

HAL JONES (? - ?)

I know absolutely nothing about this comedian, but he made some records for the REGAL label, one of which - "Inconsequentialities" (a Yokel impression) - can still raise a laugh today.

JACK JUDGE (1878-1938)

Now only remembered as part composer of "It's a long way to Tipperary" (which he recorded on WINNER), he was a minor Music Hall artist, born, I think, in Oldbury (near Birmingham). As well as acoustic recordings for REGAL and WINNER, I possess a private electric recording of him in songs in praise of 'Cremalt', a tea-time dainty, made in Oldbury!

MARIE KENDALL (1873 - 1964)

A 'sentimental and character' vocalist, who started as a child performer, becoming popular at Music Halls, also in Panto and on the legitimate stage. She had many songs, but will always be associated with "Just like the Ivy", the chorus of which (plus several other numbers) will be found on an electric DECCA, made in the 1930s, which shows her style to be rather mannered, but pleasing. This is her only known recording, although there are supposed to be some PATHE cyls. (details anyone?).

HORACE KENNEY (1888 - 1955)

Was known between the wars as a sketch artist, especially as the poor old 'Music Hall Trial Turn'. This, plus two others, can be found on the COLUMBIA label.

NEIL KENYON (? - ?)

One of the many Scottish comedians who came to London (1904) in the wake of the popularity of Lauder and became quite a favourite in songs and scenas like "The Postie" and "The Caddy" (both REGAL). There are further recordings for PATHE.

HETTY KING (1883 - 1972)

Famed male impersonator, born in New Brighton, made stage debut at the age of five and her first London appearance in 1897. Her great hit was, of course, "Ship Ahoy!", but she had many other good songs, in various characters - "I'm afraid to come home in the dark", "Follow the Tramlines", "Ragtime Cowboy Joe", etc., but she doesn't seem to have recorded any of these, the only recordings traced are one double-sided ZONO-TWIN and several electric sides for DECCA, of which I think "Piccadilly" is the best. She was still going strong when well into her eighties and can be heard on the Daniel Farson FONTANA LP at the age of seventy-eight ("Ship Ahoy!").

FRED KITCHEN (1872 - 1950)

Born in Westminster, the son of a Panto clown and on the stage from early childhood, he later became a member of the famous Fred Karno troupe. After going solo on the Halls, he appeared in many of his own sketches, as well as being in Panto and Revue. The records he made for COLUMBIA and REGAL only show how humour has changed in the last sixty years!

R.G. KNOWLES (1858 - 1919)

A Canadian, born in Hamilton, Ontario, who made his first appearance in Chicago in 1878 and became popular in Vaudeville. His London debut was in 1891 and he quickly came to the fore with his American type humour and songs like "Brighton" (really "The Bowery"). He recorded first in 1899 (six sides for BERLINER). In 1903 came some cylinders for PATHE (details, please!) and three sides on G&T. His last recordings were eight sides for EDISON BELL VELVET FACE (one side on EXO) and all show his personality to advantage.

LEW LAKE (? - ?)

A comedian and sketch artist. Some discs for COLUMBIA (REGAL).

JACK LANE (? - ?)

I don't know anything about his career, but he was a Northerner and the two records I have of him (both REGAL) - "The rest of the day's your own" and "That Cruschen Feeling" are still funny.

GEORGE LASHWOOD (1863 - 1942)

Born in the Midlands, he first went on the stage in 1883, his London debut being made six years later and he soon won success as a descriptive vocalist and comedian. It is as the latter that he will be remembered by record collectors, for he never committed to wax any of his more 'serious' efforts ("Goodbye, Dolly Gray!", "The Last Bullet", etc.). His most famous song was "Twilight" (ZONO), but there are plenty of others, such as the delightful "Riding on top of a car", "My Latch Key" (both G&T, latter also on PATHE and COLUMBIA cyl. and disc), "Sea, Sea, Sea" (ZONO, COLUMBIA) and character studies like "Send for a P'liceman!" (ZONO, COLUMBIA). He is, in fact, one of my favourites, although one has to listen to him a lot in order to get used to his style, which was not suited to early recording. He made cyls. for COLUMBIA, EDISON BELL and PATHE, discs for BERLINER, G&T, PATHE, COLUMBIA, ZONO (TWIN) and CINCH (all acoustic).

JEN LATONA (1881 - ?)

She came from Birmingham and was a fine pianist when still a child, for she appeared at Birmingham Town Hall at the age of eight! Came to the Halls in 1894, teamed up with her husband as a double act from 1900 and again went solo from 1910. It is this latter period that is represented by her recordings of such songs as "I Want to be in Dixie" on the ZONOPHONE label.

Sir HARRY LAUDER (1870 - 1950)

For most people throughout the English speaking world, Harry Lauder was Scotland and Scotland was Harry Lauder. Born in Portobello, he worked as a coal miner for ten years, during which time he gained amateur experience. Strangely enough, his first professional engagement was in Ireland as an Irish comedian (!) and he was first seen in London (1900) in this role, but soon reverted to his own style of Scottish song and humour. Thereafter, his career was simply success after success, the apex of which was probably his knighthood in 1919 for his services in World War I. His fame was not confined to the British Isles, for he was a great favourite overseas, especially in

America (where he made some records) and Australia and his appearances on the Halls were occasionally augmented by Revue and straight plays. He retired in 1935, a very rich man. Although still a great favourite with record collectors, I cannot count him among my own - for myself Will Fyffe will always be the greatest Scottish comedian. However, personal opinions aside, the number of good songs that Lauder had were legion, the choruses of many being still sung today - "Roaming in the Glaming", "Just a Wee Deoch-an-Doris", "I Love a Lassie" and "The End of the Road" are just four which are still very much alive and kicking. Not so well-known now, but worth a listen are "It's nicer to be in bed", "Rising early in the morning", "She is ma Daisy" and "That's the reason noo I wear a kilt", but these are a purely personal selection. There is a medley on HMV that contains a chorus of most of his famous songs. Lauder's voice is a good clear baritone - he also made recordings of 'Smoking Concert Ballads' like "Rocked in the cradle of the deep" - and can be listened to with pleasure for itself - but, his terrible patter! Surely this must have been awful, even fifty years ago? But no, his records sold in thousands upon thousands (patter and all!). All the songs mentioned above (and many more) can be found on the GRAMOPHONE CO. labels (including ZONOPHONE), both acoustic and electric. He is also on USA VICTOR, PATHE discs and cyls. and EDISON 2 and 4 min. and BLUE AMBEROL cyls.

JAY LAURIER (? - ?)

After making his first appearance in 1896, he was also seen in Panto and Musical Comedy, as well as becoming a popular comedian on the Halls. His songs were of mainly two types - country-yokel impressions like "Silly Billy Brown" (REGAL, BEKA, WINNER, EDISON BELL 2 min. cyl.) and food songs such as "Pudden" (HMV) - not a patch on Harry Champion's similar effusions! - in fact, many of his songs are justly forgotten. However, I rather like his version of Clarice Mayne's "It's lovely to be in love" (HMV) and shouldn't be surprised if it wasn't originally written for him. From 1937, he became known as a Shakespearean 'clown'. Retired 1947. Recordings for EDISON BELL cyls., BEKA, REGAL, WINNER, HMV. He also takes part in the HMV 'Alice in Wonderland' set.

JOHN LAWSON (1865 - 1920)

A sketch artist, his most famous character was Jacob Silveni in "Humanity". This and another sketch were recorded on WINNER.

ALICE LEAMAR (? - ?)

Originally part of the Leamar Sisters act, her famous song was "Her golden hair was hanging down her back". She recorded this many years later, at the Royal Command Performance, 1935 (HMV). I do not know if she made any other recordings.

TOM LEAMORE (1865 - 1939)

A Londoner, his first appearance was there in 1880. He went on to become a favourite comedian. Although his patter in "I thought she was so shy" (PANACHORD) wouldn't get much of a laugh today, his song "Percy from Pimlico" (DECCA) is a classic. The four sides for the DECCA company and an appearance in the Jack Hylton 'Smoking Concert, No. 2' (HMV) are his easiest accessible recordings today, but he made two sides (in 1898) for BERLINER and, slightly later, another for G&T and two EDISON BELL cylinders.

ARTHUR LENNARD (1867 - 1954)

Another 'old-timer', again born London. Started on the Halls in 1887, after having worked as a barrister's clerk. His success in the Music Halls was instantaneous. He had a nice line between comedy and the dramatic, as shown in his recording of "The Sights of London" (WINNER), tear-jerkers - the famous "Skylark!" (G&T, EDISON BELL cylinder) and sentimentality - "Sweet Seventy-Two" (WINNER). I know of two sides for G&T (issued 1904), eight cylinders for EDISON BELL and three double-sided discs for WINNER.

LOTTIE LENNOX (? - ?)

An early 'pop' singer, whose only recording traced is on single-sided ZONOPHONE (X-43022).

FRANK LEO (1874 - ?)

After writing lyrics and music for many other artists (including his wife SABLE FERN, also WILKIE BARD, JACK PLEASANTS, etc.), he decided to appear on stage himself (in 1915), singing his own songs. Recordings he made about this time for CINCH and a sketch on HMV show no special individuality.

DAN LENO (1860 - 1904)

Perhaps, even today, the most famous comic of Victorian and Edwardian times. His early life was very hard. Born in London, his parents were minor Music Hall artists and after the death of his father, Dan made his first stage appearance at the age of four, adopting his step-father's name of Leno. He and his uncle, Johnny Danvers (both as children), worked around the pubs to earn a few pence. It was only after he became a champion clog

dancer in the early 1880s, that fame was just around the corner. After appearing in two Pantos at the old Surrey Theatre, he went to Drury Lane in 1888 and was there every Christmas (frequently in partnership with HERBERT CAMPBELL) until 1903. During this time he became famous throughout the country. After his health broke down, he made a short 'come-back', but was soon to die at the age of forty-three, his demise being felt as a national calamity. Many of his songs (which are not particularly memorable) with patter, were recorded for G&T between 1900 and 1903 and require careful listening. They suffer from being recorded in truncated form to fit the needs of the two or three minutes allowed and some are very primitive, but among the very best are "The Tower Warden", "The Huntsman" and "Going to the Races" (all reissued in the HMV Historical Catalogue). His humour is often futuristic - 'Goonish' is a good word to describe it - and for an example of his character studies try "The Swimming Master" (G&T).

SOUND REFLECTIONS & ECHOES - INTRODUCTION

by BARRY RAYNAUD

(formerly engineer with Pye Records, ATV House, London, W.1)

When I decided to write some short articles on the studio recording of music and its reproduction in the home, I began to reflect - just where does one begin? At the advent of micro-groove LPs and 45s? The shellac 78? The Hill-and-Dale Records or Centre-start Pathes? Or go right back to the cylinder machine of Edison.

So much is already written about this subject these days in a multitude of magazines that I wondered if I could add anything original at all. Over the years their number has grown from just one - the 'Gramophone' founded by Compton Mackenzie in the 1920s - to row upon row in the booksellers' displays now. Each has its own particular approach; leaning towards either a technical, musical or commercial viewpoint - but there is a good deal of duplication of features and information.

I often wonder just how useful the fine detail of the hundreds of equipment reports published is to the average reader anyway, or whether he could interpret them correctly. Judging from the sound of some of the so-called 'Hi-Fi' demonstrated in the showroom, and the lack of knowledge by the salesmen, many purchasers of quite expensive gear must be at the mercy of chance. My advice to the buyer would be: study reports (including the specifications and diagrams) by all means, but use this data as a subjective basis only. Put little store on appearances, disregard sales patter entirely, and let your ears be the final (objective) judge. Naturally, the more expensive equipment is usually the better, but not always so, bearing in mind that the point of 'diminishing returns' can soon be reached - so don't be over-ambitious - and many good second-hand sets can be bargains.

"A chain is only as strong as its weakest link" is so true in Hi-Fi as to be axiomatic - and yet many people will mix good with indifferent items and (predictably) the results will be disappointing. Because this type of commentary and advice-column is covered so profusely by the existing press, it is not my intention to add to it here. My aim in this introductory article is to point out just how wide the audio subject is, including for example: studio techniques, and the variations employed for radio, cinema and TV sound; the effects of the home environment on the reproduction; the processing and pressing of the discs, the musical instruments and their players; reproduction in large auditoria (and open air); equipments of bygone decades - and proposed systems for the years to come; and many other facets besides, all of which are part of 'Hi-Fi' as we know it. As well as the obvious fundamentals, detail is so important - even the angle of a cutting stylus can have profound effect upon the final reproduction.

Already an anomaly appears. What exactly is the true definition of this ubiquitous word, or expression, 'High Fidelity'? As everyone - hobbyist, musician, engineer, schoolboy, pop fanatic, manufacturer - has his own opinion, all based on quite different criteria, that question may forever remain unanswered. But I hope to cover, or maybe just touch upon some of these diverse subjects as time goes by.

by GEORGE FROW

Being only human, even the most experienced recording artists at times found the strain of making a three minute record too much for them, but it is a tonishing that so many of these errors with slips or asides should have been passed and issued at the time. Distance lends enchantment, all is forgiven, and these frailties bring a little charm to their surviving records.

The most common slip was the aside after the song or the speech and before the recording engineer had a chance to stop the machine, and was usually "was that all right?" Such offenders included the baritone Sir Charles Santley, and none less than the British Prime Minister at the start of the Great War - Herbert Asquith. There are lots more in this class.

An early aberration in an early record is Dan Leno's famous ten-inch "Tower of London" (G. & T. 2435, later B 1778, matrix 1129), where he describes the sentry as having his gun fixed, then realises it was the bayonet that was fixed. Later performers of recorded monologues would have ironed that one out.

The pianist Vladimir de Pachmann (1848-1933) made recordings on H.M.V. and Victor particularly, was in a class of his own and was inclined to stop playing to explain a point to the listener (examples on DA 761 and DA 1302), and it would be helpful to know what oddities of his were never issued; however he was considered highly as a perfect Chopin player and these eccentricities were overlooked, and most of his records are free from interruption.

Another sort of interruption used to come from Toscanini, who would join in with the singers he was conducting, and he can be heard in good voice in the first act of the complete "Boheme" in particular. Another who joined in was Casals, but with grunts rather than song. Beecham was a conductor who hummed at times, and although not possession the records, I recall that Sir Thomas thanked the orchestra at the end of one of the sides of Columbia DX 702 and 703 ("Damnation of Faust" excerpts); an American L.P. recently received has the conductor asking "Can we go home now?" after completing two sides of unfamiliar music. It was a happy thought to leave that on the record, and the engineer is heard assuring him that all went well.

A unique oddity in the 'intruding sound' section occurs in a Rossini overture recorded at the Kingsway Hall by Decca in their Full Frequency Range Recording (FFRR) years before they introduced L.P. here in 1950. I haven't the record, but as far as I can recall it is "La Scala di Seta" on K 2123, and in a quiet section a tramcar can be heard rumbling through the Kingsway Subway, which was about fifty yards away. It's FFRR all right, and it seems incredible the record was passed for sale when we remember how conscious Decca were of the tonal fidelity and superiority of their records at that time - such pieces were often recommended for demonstration.

"A side that never was" could be applied to an early Columbia electric 78 recorded by the Johann Strauss Orchestra. There were at one time about a dozen of these discs in the British catalogue, and if they were played without any imagination and poorly recorded it is of no matter here, but they circulated surprisingly widely and were issued all over Europe and in other parts of the world, some up to L.P. days. British number 9289 has "Voices of Spring" on one side, and it finishes in the middle of a phrase leaving the listener right in the air, and obviously in need of a second side to get him down again; I have no catalogues that show part two to have been issued, and "Radetzky" is the normal coupling.

A dropped instrument should be more than enough to stop a recording, but a xylophone duet of "The Two Imps" on Regal-Zonophone MR 2427 included a stick dropped on the xylophone. A remake, even for what was a shilling record in its day, might have been considered. Another dropped stick - this time a cleaner's broomstick - occurs during a cinema organ L.P. received from America (Doric 1404), and the record company has wisely not excised it.

One could go on - down the funnel of triviality perhaps - with more examples, but it is suggested that some members might like to send in their own lists along these lines for possible publication in this magazine. Our Chairman and Treasurer have agreed that the best presented list (not necessarily the longest) will win for its sender a year of free membership. Entries are invited from all over the world, and we do ask for sources such as record numbers, to be given. If you send your entry to me: G.L. Frow, [REDACTED] Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 3SH, England, I will see that all reach the Chairman and Committee for consideration, and as many contributions as possible will be published in HILLDALE NEWS. The closing date will be January 31st, 1976, and results will be announced and published as soon as possible afterwards. I would ask that this exercise does not result in prolonged correspondence for me, as I am at present trying to invent a 48 hour day, and am merely the chap who conceived the competition.



An early Edison Diamond Disc phonograph of about 1913. Notice that this is the Amberola 1 cabinet, with two record drawers instead of four. This example was originally sold in Canada; early Edison disc machines are rare in this country, since they were not shipped across the Atlantic commercially until the end of the Great War. This was due partly to the demand in America, partly to the fire at the Edison factory, and partly to import restrictions during the war.

Keep the Union Jack Flying! -- An Edison-Bell Gem phonograph with 30-inch brass horn. An interesting feature of these is the little wheel, like that in a glass-cutter, which tracks in the feed-screw in place of the usual friction-producing nut. Unlike the Edison Gem, the case is simply a miniature Standard.





STEPHEN M. LEONARD

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THE EARLIEST WAX CYLINDERS

Recently Joe Pengelly, who works with the British Broadcasting Corporation at Radio Plymouth, sent me cuttings from the B.B.C. house magazine "Ariel" which state that the Corporation believes it has the earliest surviving Edison cylinder. Certainly Joe took up his pen as a vigilant Society member would do in the call of duty and said "prove it", and the original assertion and correspondence following make good reading and add a little to what is known of the subject.

Firstly though to set the scene, let us recall two previously known 'earliest' Edison cylinders. For a long time Number One was Sir Arthur Sullivan who said his piece on October 5th, 1888; then in the last year or two this has been overtaken by the recording made by Lord Stanley, Governor General of Canada, at the opening of the Toronto International Exhibition, and now dated at about 13th September 1888. By the way Lord Stanley should not be confused with Sir Henry Morton Stanley, journalist and explorer, who presumed Livingstone, and who is said to have also recorded for Colonel Gouraud.

Now all this started in the September 24th edition of "Ariel", wherein a B.B.C. producer, Bennett Maxwell, stated that while researching cylinders for a programme he was preparing on the Henry Irving cylinder, he thoroughly examined a box of eight white-wax cylinders the B.B.C. had bought from a secondhand shop in Hounslow, near London, in 1951. The box had originally been sent by Edison to Colonel Gouraud, then his London agent, and one of the cylinders was labelled as having been made by Edison on June 16th 1888. The other cylinders in the box, Maxwell stated, were made by Gouraud at a later date, and include records of the Prince and Princess of Wales and Lord Salisbury at Sandringham, the Royal Family's country estate in Norfolk.

At this point it should be said that Bennett Maxwell is something of an expert on very early cylinders, and has much information on Col. Gouraud and his activities, drawn from newspapers and other sources. He is unquestionably a person who knows what he is talking about.

Subsequently Joe Pengelly sailed into print and Maxwell's claim that the Edison cylinder was the first wax cylinder, citing Bell and Tainter's patents (applied for in June 1885, granted June 1886) for a wax coated cardboard cylinder; also how did Maxwell know this was the first Edison wax cylinder, as on June 16th 1888 Edison emerged at 5 am after his five days and nights vigil with the Improved Phonograph? (Incidentally Josephson states this was 72 hours only). How was it, says Joe, that Edison should have sent the first evidence of his success to his agent in

England, and what is recorded on this cylinder? He goes on to ask for details of the recordings by the Prince and Princess of Wales - later King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra - and suggests that exploration of the Royal Archives might reveal a recording by Queen Victoria.

Bennett Maxwell in reply substantiates his earlier claim fully, the Edison recording to Col. Gouraud was made at 2 am on June 16th 1888, as written on the cylinder peg label, and before Edison 'emerged' and posed for the famous picture, apparently at 5-30 am. Col. Gouraud in a letter to The Times eleven days afterwards, refers to this recording as Edison's 'first phonogram'. Maxwell goes on to add that the royal recordings in question are of such poor quality that they are barely audible and thus unsuitable for broadcasting, but adds nothing about what Edison says on the phonogram.

These references to the royal cylinders sent me to my bookshelves, where I thought I could find the answer to what the royal couple were supposed to have said: it is in a book called "The Story of Edison" (Frank Mundell, 1898), and this is what it told me.

"I am delighted with this instrument", said the Princess of Wales;

"Yes, most wonderful, most marvellous", the Prince struck in.

"I can add nothing to that which Their Royal Highnesses have just spoken", said Lord Salisbury.

Delightful, isn't it? It's a pity we shall never know what Their Highnesses said on these cylinders. As Joe Pengelly reminds us, King Edward VII was credited with a German accent inherited from his father, and perhaps the cylinder would have proved or disproved this once and for all.

There are still one or two loose ends sticking out in this saga which other members may be able to trim for us.

As Joe Pengelly asks, are there any audible Bell and Tainter cylinders existing which are known to pre-date Edison's June 16th 1888 wax roller - as my book calls them? This seems a suitable opportunity to get to the roots of the subject once and for all, and HILLANDALE NEWS welcomes helpful replies from members.

Secondly what evidence is there that Queen Victoria made more than one cylinder? According to reliable reports, she sent a cylinder message to the Emperor of Ethiopia with a request for it to be destroyed after playing; other private recordings of hers are at times discussed when two or three 'phonophiles' are gathered together. I am sure that Bennett Maxwell knows more about these very early cylinders than anyone in the country, and could he spare the time to drop us a line on his findings?

Again thanks to Joe Pengelly for bringing all this to the Society's attention, and I only hope this short article has presented the matter clearly.

George Frow.

Since I wrote the above, a radio programme has been transmitted on B.B.C. Radio 3 on October 23rd on the Henry Irving cylinders, and rather than try to alter or re-write, I am offering the following account of that programme, in which Bennett Maxwell was much involved.

G.L.F.

THE VOICE OF HENRY IRVING* - A RADIO INVESTIGATION

This is the sort of programme that makes very good Radio, and it was the culmination of a long investigation into the recordings made by Sir Henry Irving, the eminent Victorian actor-manager. The programme was narrated by Richard Bebb who had initiated the investigation, and produced by an authority on these early recordings, Bennett Maxwell. Bebb was to use his actor's experience towards analysing Irving's declamations, but unfortunately space here prevents this aspect being given in the detail in which it was given on the radio. We have known this programme to have been in preparation for some time, but its roots apparently go back to shortly after the last war when Richard Bebb's interests were aroused by a passage in Ellen Terry's autobiography, in which she noted that Irving had written to her in August 1888 to say he had made a recording and had been horrified at his own voice.

Knowing that the B.B.C. possessed two recorded fragments on cylinders which were believed to be Irving, Richard Bebb and Bennett Maxwell decided to investigate, and after a real detective story and some eighty years, believe they have unearthed practically everything that can be found out about Irving's cylinders, and that no other recordings remain to be discovered. Henry Irving died in 1905, by which time the gramophone was established and taken seriously, but all he left of his art were a few private cylinders made at the homes of friends, and they carry no

Cast-iron guarantee of his voice, but from the depth of his investigations, Bebb believes they are genuine.

Colonel Gouraud comes into the story really before Irving; it is known that he was on a visit to Menlo Park when Edison was concluding his work on the Improved Phonograph on June 16th, 1888, and brought the prototype back to England. By enticing as many celebrities as he could into his Upper Norwood home, he could record their voices and thus endorse Edison's wonderful invention. Gouraud knew Irving, and recorded him at the end of August 1888 in the presence of two other prominent friends, one of whom after wrote an account of the incident. This was only ten weeks after Edison's successful improvement of the machine, and the Irving cylinder was one in the box that the B. B. C. bought from Hounslow in 1951, and has since been identified as "The Maniac" by 'Monk'-Lewis. Gouraud said afterwards that he had to coach a frightened Irving in the correct approach and address to the recording phonograph.

Preceding "The Maniac" on the same cylinder was a Victorian poem by Sir Edwin Arnold, called "The Feast of Belshazzar", but I found it difficult to identify much of these extracts through an 'express train' background, and marvel at the patience of producer and presenter in getting enough from the cylinder to track down the titles.

In 1937, following an appeal from the B. B. C. to copy interesting early cylinder records in the hands of the public, six were offered by the adopted son of Sir Henry Morton Stanley, the explorer; these were of H. M. Stanley, Henry Irving, Benoit-Constant Coquelin (creator of Cyrano de Bergerac, 1897), Cecil Rhodes, Joseph Chamberlain (the British politician), and Sven Hedin the Swedish geographer. These led Bebb and Maxwell nearly forty years later to the home of the Stanley family today, and there they found an early phonograph bearing an engraved plate which showed it to have been given by Col. and Mrs. G. E. Gouraud to Henry Morton Stanley and his wife at the time of their marriage on July 12th, 1890. With this machine were 50 cylinders in the drawers under it, including the Irving; Bebb suggests that he and Coquelin may well have been recorded through friendship with Stanley's wife, who moved in artistic circles.

The Irving cylinder was re-dubbed for broadcasting, using a specially sized stylus, and is of the speech starting "Now is the Winter of our Discontent", from 'Richard III'. Irving had probably intended to record this in full, but he runs out of cylinder without completing it.

For his fourth fragment Richard Bebb had important lacunae filled in by a retired actor and Irving enthusiast, Eric Jones-Evans, who managed to place the excerpt as from Tennyson's 'Becket', Act IV, Scene II; he was also helpful in establishing the speed of the dubbings and providing other background information. Incidentally 'Becket' was the last play Irving appeared in; he collapsed after a performance in Bradford in 1905.

The fifth and last cylinder played was Wolseley's Farewell from 'King Henry VIII', Act III, Scene II, and Richard Bebb told us of doubts about this record's authenticity; he thought it was now too late ever to establish its genuineness beyond doubt, though on analysis he came down more on the side of accepting it than rejecting it. It is a dark blue wax cylinder, probably made after Irving was knighted in 1895, as he is referred to as Sir Henry, and the cylinder has not been improved by passing through several hands. Had he thought of it, Richard Bebb said he could have confirmed its provenance with the actor Edward Gordon-Craig who appeared with Irving in this production, and who died only nine years ago.

It is quite beyond anyone's ability to try and compress forty minutes of close broadcasting into a small space, particularly when much of it was taken up with an analysis of Irving's voice production and pronunciation, so essential to confirming the authenticity of the cylinders, and indeed this is an inadequate tribute to a programme that was meticulously prepared and fairly presented. It seems astounding that all the research, correspondence, travel and listening to tape can go off into the ether in such a short space of time. I feel it would be wonderful to have this in a permanent form available to every student of the earliest phonographs, a record or a pamphlet perhaps, and we must thank Messrs. Bebb and Maxwell and ask for more of this sort of programme, if possible. They do it so well!

* For overseas members, Sir Henry Irving (1838 - 1905, born John Henry Broadbribb) was one of the principal late-Victorian actor-managers, leading his own Company at the Lyceum Theatre, London, from 1878. For 24 years he had a famous acting partnership with Ellen Terry, and was knighted by Queen Victoria in 1895. Afficionados of the horror novel may recall that Bram Stoker, who wrote 'Dracula', was Irving's stage manager from 1878.

CORRESPONDENCE

[REDACTED] Sheffield, S11 9RS, Yorks.

Dear Sir,

I can help the author of "A Puzzlement" (Hillandale News 86, 393) with regard to his Zonophone by Max Mieli.

X-179L is a 1902/03 recording by the independent International Zonophone Company before its takeover by G&T. X-92036 is a 1904 G&T/Zonophone and does have the matrix 251L (not 2511). The suffix 'L' indicates Fritz Hampe as recording engineer and the series was one of the short-lived "Zonophone" series used by G&T in 1903 and 1904. Without hearing the discs, I would suggest that they are different recordings. An article on Gramophone Company matrix numbering should appear shortly in the Record Collector (Vol. 23, No. 1).

Yours sincerely,

Alan Kelly.

[REDACTED] Haywards Heath, Sussex.

Dear Mr. Brott,

I don't know if you were at the Alexandra Palace last Saturday. Possibly the early Start was unfortunate, especially for stall holders.

Thanks to two friends from Holland I was able to use a full spread of stall for my little 'oddities' with which I had hoped to obtain information and also to encourage others who had interesting records. However, I still have some queries which perhaps your readers would care to answer.

MASTERPIECE 10". Cat. No. 8506. A & B. Matrix 7919-41/7920-42. La Donna E Mobile/Vesti La Giubba. A very pleasant tenor but un-named. Regular Green label by Musicraft Records Inc.

HERTIE Lilliput-Form. Another addition to the 7" range with German titles and French registration. One side has pronounced raised rim. Cat. No. 1065/1082, Matrix 409/427. Jazz-band artists. Definitely acoustic. Did this range include any worthwhile artists?

DIAMOND Record 10½". H. & D. etched label in blue. Cut-diamond trade mark made in France. English titles of no consequence. Cat. 0.51 1, 05.1 2, Matric 636/85 (Figures 9 and 12 also). Was this one of the many Pathe ranges and was it extensive?

AUTO-DISQUE-PATHE 12". 'Omnium Pathephone', 60 Rue de la Victoire, Paris. Orange label, identical recording on each side of Clement regular version of Le Reve de les Grieux. Pressed in biscuit material, Matrix 3402 3 R., Cat. No. 41 (also a figure 5 on both sides). Was this a mistake or do the duplicated pressings serve some special function?

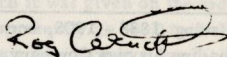
LUXUX Record 12". Pirate record believed to be American. Green label with mandolin player-figure. Ecco ridente il cielo by unnamed tenor believed to be Fernando de Lucia, reverse Bella figlia del Amore quartet believed to be Caruso/Gallicurci version. Matrix mirror numbers 3017-1/2. Inferior pressing but reasonably quiet.

DOME DISCK 10¾". Phono-Comp-Limit-Milano. Artisti di Fama Mondiale. Cat. Nos. 164/5 in the series feature L. Brambilla (Sop) and E. de Marco (Bar). No matrix nos. Have no idea how extensive this label might be.

AUSTROTON 10". An interesting label having a brass spindle bushing and titles of reverse side included.

DURIUM RECORD 4". Christmas greetings from Compton Mackenzie and Christopher Stone (as signed on reverse). Presumably Christopher doing the talking, and singing?

You may find something amongst the above of interest.



CORRESPONDENCE

[REDACTED] Sheffield, S11 9RS, Yorks.

Dear Sir,

I have only just seen your issue No. 80 of a year ago with its notes of Frank Andrews on John O'Reilly. May I point out that Mr. Andrews has inadvertently given much credit where little is due. It is true that I and my colleagues are collaborating on an extensive study of Gramophone Company matrix series, but, as a glance at the O'Reilly article will show (Record Collector, March 1974), the bulk of the credit should go to John Ward and to Dr. J.F. Perkins. In fact, John Ward's was the original discovery in this instance.

As a matter of interest, I understand that one (damaged) O'Reilly has turned up and is "undoubtedly by McCormack". Surely somebody has another?

Yours sincerely,

Alan Kelly.

[REDACTED] Bournemouth BH6 4JA.

Dear Mr. Editor,

I noted with interest Philip Hobson's initial article compiling a listing of Music Hall artists who recorded. I hope that first of all he has gone back to source, e.g. Music Hall programmes, "Era", etc, say, from 1895 onwards, to find out just who did appear on the halls before compiling his listing of artists.

I hope too that artists who entertained in the Music Halls on such other instruments than the human voice, e.g. trumpet, xylophone, violin, bagpipes, etc. will be included. Even members of the British Music Hall Society tend to ignore these other entertainers. I shall hope also to see names like Ian Colquhoun (who had phenomenal 'runs' at the Alhambra during the Boer War) and that other great singer (and golfer) Leo Stormont included. Even Lionel Brough appeared at the Coliseum and I think his G&T's very funny.

A very useful appendix would be of non-music hall artists who recorded the famous songs of real music hall artists who did not record at all, or very little. For instance, W.H. Berry recorded quite a number of Columbia cylinders which included unrecorded items of Dan Leno and T.E. Dunville.

Finally, a plea to older Members of the Society. Is there anyone who remembers the voice of Arthur Lloyd on stage?

Sincerely,

Ernie Bayly.

OUR SOCIETY - AND OTHERS OF LONG AGO

by FRANK ANDREWS

In the majority of instances, those of you who are now reading these words will be members of the oldest talking machine society in Great Britain, if not the whole world, and although your only contact with the Society, no matter where you may live in the world, is only through your receipt 6 times a year of The Hillandale News, and the occasional correspondence, nonetheless, if you are anything like me, you take a great amount of pride in your membership, for our history is not without its moments of glory and display of talent. Was not Mr. T.A. Edison himself our patron, and did not the membership in the early days have the privilege of the presence of Mr. Jonathan Lewis Young, who, well over thirty years earlier had been General Manager in London of the Edison Phonograph Company, under the proprietorship of Colonel G. Gouraud? The brothers Sykes, Felix and Adrian, Henry Seymour, members of the Hough (Edison Bell) family and representatives of the old trade journals have all been associated with our Society at one time or another.

But we are, or were, late-comers into the arena of Phonograph and Gramophone Societies. The history of the Talking Machine Societies is obscure because in the very earliest of days, those who formed themselves into groups

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 * ANSWER - Lugton & Co. Ltd. advertisement, *
 * see page 396. *
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 * Between SEPT. 1913 and SEPT. 1914. *
 * Phoenix were first out in Sept/Oct. 1913. *
 * Lugton advertised Sterling for the last time *
 * in Sept./Oct. 1914. *
 *
 *

with recorded sound as their common interests did not call themselves "Societies" but called themselves "clubs" and such-like, which were constantly being formed and dispersing.

It was not until 1911, that one can really speak of the Society aspect of our hobby and interest as having become firmly established, and the basis of this foundation of the movement, which has continued ever since, was in no little measure due to the interest in the new societies by such trade periodicals as "The Talking Machine News" and "The Sound Wave". Both these papers had, for many years, opened their columns to correspondents' views and for an answering service for the many queries sent in with regard to every aspect of records and machines, which were in a constant state of flux, especially during the first thirteen years of the century. The more knowledgeable of the correspondents were constantly in print and among the many names appearing one could be use of seeing those of Alfred Lomax, Linzey Wilcox, Henry Seymour, J. Lewis Young, J.E. Hough, Adrian Sykes, C.W.R. Miles and R.H. Clarke. Many of these being in the trade for many years, their correspondence was avidly read and responded to. Gradually the to and froing of ideas and rebuttals, and the offers of demonstrations to prove points at issue, led to the desirability of meetings and it was as a matter of course that when some of these regular correspondents announced the possibility and probability of societies being formed, the journals were almost committed to allowing the views of their long standing correspondents an airing on the subject.

Thus it was that on June 29th, 1911, that the society, which is credited as being the first talking machine society in Britain (in the modern style) was formed and our present Society has a connection with that society in the person of Mr. Adrian F. Sykes, who became our first President, after Mr. T.A. Edison found that he could not accept the position but graciously offered to become our patron.

THE NORTH WEST LONDON PHONOGRAPH AND GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY

The first meeting of this society was held on June 29th, 1911, at 157, Broadway, Cricklewood, N.W. (Your writer of this article was born nine years later just a 1d. (Child's) fare away on the Metropolitan Tramways trams, and today holds down a job in a factory in Cricklewood, about three quarters of a mile away).

"The Sound Wave" reported:- "The attendance was good, with our old friend Mr. Adrian F. Sykes in the Chair. The business of the evening consisted chiefly in forming the rules, regulations, etc. At the close of the meeting the Chairman, addressing the members present said, 'It was no light undertaking, the formation of this society', and he hoped they would give both Mr. Songest (the Secretary) and himself all the help they could to make the society a success."

It was decided to hold meetings on the last Thursday in each month.

The Editor of "The Sound Wave" added a footnote which read: "We are pleased to learn that a society of talking machine enthusiasts has at last been formed and we wish it every success. Those of our readers who wish to join should communicate with the Secretary, Mr. L.V. Songest, 157, The Broadway, Cricklewood, N.W.", which demonstrates, nicely, the support that talking machine societies were to receive from the journals.

The North West London society was then about five weeks old, but immediately others were on the move! In this same August issue of "The Sound Wave" came an appeal from Mr. W.J. Wallace Hamill, 41 Westcroft Square, Tavenscourt Park, Hammersmith, W., who "would be pleased if all enthusiasts, whether disc or cylinder, residing in Hammersmith, Fulham, Chiswick, Shepherds Bush, Notting Hill, Paddington and district, would either forward their names or give him a call at the above address, with the object of forming a branch of the North-West London Phonograph & Gramophone Society. A meeting will be held at an early date."

Mr. Adrian Sykes, wrote to Secretary Mr. W.J.W. Hamill of the new "West London Phonograph & Gramophone Society" on November 9th, 1911, stating that his time did "not accept of me accepting the post of President".

Another early society formed was the one which begat ours!

The inaugural meeting of the North London Phonograph and Gramophone Society was held at 74, Drayton Park, Highbury, on Saturday, December 11th, 1911 at 8 o'clock p.m. with Mr. C.R.W. Miles in the Chair (our first recording secretary!)

At this time, any member of any of the few Phonograph and/or Gramophone societies which had come into existence during the previous six months, was, ipso facto, a member of all the societies. For how long this situation existed I do not know.

74, Drayton Park was the residence of a Mr. F. Wallace and was situated but a few minutes walk from Drayton Park Station, which was then on the Great Northern & City Railway. The acting Secretary (pro tem) was Mr. Adrian Sykes - no less!

No wonder is it that our Society, at its October 1919 meeting, referred to Mr. Adrian Sykes, Bachelor of Science, as "The Founder of the Talking Machine Society Movement".

Living at 290 Blackhorse Lane, Walthamstow, in December 1911, Mr. R.H. Clarke began appealing, through the pages of Talking Machine News & Journal of Amusements, for persons to come forward in his efforts to form a talking machine society in Walthamstow, Essex. As you who have read my recent accounts of the early days and meetings of our own Society will know, R.H. Clarke later became a member of our Society and published a magazine for members, and other enthusiasts, which has variously been described as "The Phonogram" and "The Phonograph". (Perhaps if any long standing member has an issue of Mr. Clarke's magazine they would write to the Editor and let him know what the correct style was?).

If it was called "The Phonogram", this would have been but a re-use of the name for a periodical devoted to matters phonographic, for J. Lewis Young, mentioned earlier, probably has the honour of producing the world's first talking machine paper which he called "The Phonogram", the first issue of which saw the light of day in May, 1893, published from his Edison Phonograph Company premises in Fore Street, in the City of London, in connection with his own illegal business of selling patent infringing phonographs and cylinder records, some of which were London recordings. The periodical appeared monthly and was on sale at railway station bookstalls and from W.H. Smith & Sons, the last issue appearing in November 1893, Young having fled to Holland! If members should care to read the first three issues of this magazine, our member, Mr. Ernie Bayly, has them on sale printed in facsimile and bound within one cover as a combined production. They are not available separately. Until Ernie reproduced these three consecutive issues, the British Museum Library (now the National Library), possessed a copy of only the first issue. When reading Lewis Young's "The Phonogram", it is well to remember that the proprietor was already facing law-suits for patent infringement, as this brings more significance to much that was printed therein.

I have digressed!

It would seem that R.H. Clarke was unsuccessful in forming a Walthamstow society, for very soon afterwards he was a member of the new North London Phonograph and Gramophone Society.

The first society, the "North-West London", quickly faded from the scene, leaving the West London society as the oldest in existence, which fact was fought out among representatives of various societies in the ensuing years. Mr. Wykes, of the Northants Society, its founder, was once foolish enough to claim his Society as the oldest, and was promptly corrected by Hamill of West London. Mr. Wykes was a visitor to our Society in the early 'twenties.

REPORTS OF THE CITY OF LONDON PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY'S MEETINGS DURING THE TENTH YEAR OF THEIR EXISTENCE, MAY 1928 TO APRIL 1929.

MAY 1928

The Society held its ninth Annual General Meeting on May 16th, and there was a large attendance of members and friends.

After the re-election of the Officers of the Society had been proceeded with, a Dutch Auction of Blue Amberol records was held with Mr. R.H. Clarke as Auctioneer.

Felix Sykes, Recording Secretary.

JUNE 1928

Our June meeting was devoted to a concert of cylinder records carefully selected by Mr. Wilkins.

Among the titles played may be mentioned: "Aida" - March (2145); Paderewski's "Minuet" (1558); "Addio del Passato", "La Traviata", Agostinelli (28159); "Sweet Spirit Hear My Prayer", "Lurline", Maire Narelle (2450); Quartette from "Rigoletto" (1528); "Three Quotations", No. 3, Sousa's Band (5507) and "Mi par d'Udir Ancora", "Pescatore di Perle" by Aristodemo Giorgini (28199).

Next month (July 18th), Mr. Clarke intends to give a demonstration of Wax Amberol recordings, including grand opera selections by Blanche Arral, Carmen Melis, Constantino, Luigi Lucenti and Selma Kurz.

Cylinder enthusiasts will be most interested to learn that the Edison Company has just brought out a new phonograph,

the Amberola 60. This machine is much larger than other Amberola phonographs at present in the market, and it is fitted with the New Amberola Diamond Reproducer, which has a slightly increased tension. The new phonograph will take the place of the Amberola 50 and, notwithstanding the improved features, there is no advance in price.

Felix Sykes, Recording Secretary.

JULY Meeting Report remains untraced.

AUGUST 1928

The programme of Blue Amberol records demonstrated at our August meeting was arranged by Mr. S.H. Dowse.

The first portion of the concert was devoted to records that have been withdrawn from the catalogue, whilst the remainder of the evening was devoted to cylinders that remain in the Blue Amberol list.

Amongst the items played may be mentioned:- "Raymond Overture" (1919); "Dreams of the Prisoner" (2460); "Gipsy John" (1649); Weber's "Last Thought" (2506); "Toreador Song", "Carmen", Peter Dawson (23065); "Extase Reverie", Tollefsen Trio (1904) and "Der Tambour der Garde", overture (2014).

For September, Mr. Maskell will provide the programme, whilst for our October meeting we are fortunate in securing the services of Mr. Watts, of the London and Provincial Phonograph Company, who will demonstrate the new Amberola 60 Phonograph.

Felix Sykes, Recording Secretary.

SEPTEMBER 1928 Report remains untraced.

OCTOBER 1928

Mr. Watts, of the London & Provincial Phonograph Company, gave a demonstration of the new Amberola 60 Phonograph at our October meeting. This phonograph is fitted with the new style diamond reproducer.

Amongst the cylinders played may be mentioned:- "William Tell", overture (1863); "Three Quotations", No. 2, "And I, too, was born in Arcadia", Sousa's Band (5474); "Queen among the Heather", Sir Harry Lauder (5506); Selections from "The Gondoliers", National Military Band (23170); "My Old Shako", Peter Dawson (3590); "Comfort Ye, My People" and "Hallelujah Chorus", both from the "Messiah", Reinald Werrenrath (5415); "Romantica Mazurka", Jose Rocabruna (22140); and two arias from "Rigoletto", "Questi o Quella" and "La Donna e Mobile", by Alessandro Bonci (29001).

Members were pleased with the volume and tone of the latest Edison Phonograph, particularly with the new reproducer.

Cylinder enthusiasts are invited to become members of this Society, which is now in its tenth year of existence.

Meetings are held every third Wednesday in the month at the Food Reform Restaurant, Furnival Street, E.C. at 6-30 p.m.

Next meeting (November 21st), Mr. Maskell is going to give a demonstration of Blue Amberols.

Felix Sykes, Recording Secretary.

NOVEMBER 1928

At our November meeting, Mr. Maskell demonstrated his Edison "Triumph" Phonograph fitted with a special tension reproducer. It is interesting to note that Mr. Maskell's instrument has been in use for over 30 years, although the owner has adapted it to play the present day Blue Amberol records.

The programme was of a very varied character and included such items as the following: "Le Carnaval Romain", overture, Johann Strauss Band (26024); "Stars and Stripes Forever", march, Sousa's Band (2104); Quartette from "Rigoletto" (1528); "Les Montagnards" (27024); "It's Nice when you Love a Wee Lassie", Sir Harry Lauder (1820); "Glory of the Yankee Navy", march, Sousa's Band (5211); "The Night before Xmas" (2464); Schubert's "Am Meer", mixed quartette (26102); "Dreams of Galilee" (2204); and "Moonlight on the Lake" (2278).

The next meeting of our Society will be held on Wednesday, December 11th. The first portion of the evening will be devoted to a Dutch Auction of Blue Amberol Cylinders, whilst Mr. Wilkins will demonstrate a number of records after the Auction. All meetings are held at the Food Reform Restaurant, Furnival Street, E.C. at 6-30 pm.

Felix Sykes, Recording Secretary.

DECEMBER 1928 & JANUARY 1929 COMBINED REPORT

The December meeting of the above Society took the form of a Dutch Auction of Blue Amberol Records and was most interesting.

Mr. Wilkins provided a very attractive programme of cylinders at our January meeting.

The following records deserve special mention:- Dance of the Hours - "La Gioconda" (3536, 3537); Addio del Passato - "La Traviata", Agostinelli (28159); Softly Awakes My Heart - "Samson and Delilah", Sgnt. Leggett (23185); Mi par d'udir ancora from "Pescatori di Perle", Aristodemo Giorgini (28199); Volksliedchen and Bohemian Dance, Hoffmann Quartette (28189); Entr'acte and Valse, from "Coppelia", Armand Versy and his Hungarian Orch. (28181); Paderewski's Minuet (1558); Extase - Reverie, Tollefsen Trio (1904); Tosti's "Goodbye", Ricardo Martin (28167); Alas those Chimes from "Maritana", Ethel Toms (?); and three records by Charles W. Harrison, The Palms (1503); For This (1546); and Rudolph's Narrative from "La Boheme" (2184).

Our next meeting will be held on February 20th at 6-30 p.m. in the Food Reform Restaurant, Furnival Street, E.C. when Mr. Clarke is to provide the programme.

Felix Sykes, Recording Secretary.

FEBRUARY 1929

Mr. R.H. Clarke provided the programme of Blue Amberols at our February meeting. Among the records demonstrated during the evening may be mentioned:- "Thais" - Meditation, Albert Spalding (28102); Prologo, "Pagliacci", Carlo Galeffi (28134); Bells of St. Malo, National Military Band (23013); Airs from "The Mikado" (2179); Never the Maiden Dreamed - "Mignon", Chas W. Harrison; In the Garden of Romance, Gladys Rice & Frederick Wheeler (3063); Godard's Second Mazurka, Andre Benoist (3578); Valse Caprice, Victor Young (4636); One Fine Day - "Madame Butterfly", Agnes Kimball (2057); and Rachmaninoff's Prelude, N.M.B. (23086).

Our March meeting (March 20th) will be devoted to a demonstration of old two minute wax cylinder records and many of the titles which will be played were recorded over twenty years ago.

The Recording Secretary has a very fine Edison Bell cylinder record of the Cavatina from "Faust" sung by the Austrian tenor, Paul Schmeders, recorded in 1906, and this record will be included in a programme which will be of real historical interest.

Full particulars of the Society can be obtained from Mr. J.T. Wilkins, 14, Burns Road, London, S.W.11.

Felix Sykes, Recording Secretary.

MARCH 1929

The March Meeting was of an especially interesting character, for a number of two-minute wax cylinder records were demonstrated to an enthusiastic audience.

The records were remarkable not only on account of their historical interest but also because of the delicate tone and life-like reproduction which was obtained from cylinders made well over twenty years ago.

Included in the programme were the following Edison Standard records: "Patience" - Selection (H.M. Grenadier Guards Band) recorded in 1903; "Ah, So Pure" from "Martha" (Frederick C. Freemantle); the "Good Night" quartette from "Martha" (Metropolitan Quartette); Intermezzo from "Carmen" (Parisian Symphony Orch.); "Hey, Donal!" (Harry Lauder); "La Traviata" - Waltz, flute solo (Eugene C. Rose); The Mountaineers from "William Tell", flute and oboe duet (by soloists of La Musique du Garde Republicaine, France); and For All Eternity (Mary Porter Mitchell).

A "Sterling" Record, of special excellence, Trio from "H.M.S. Pinafore", sung by Ada Florence, Ernest Pike and Walter Hyde, was also played, as well as two splendid Edison-Bell phonograph records, made in 1906, by Paul Shmedes, entitled Der Lenz, and Cavatine from "Faust".

The cylinder which received the greatest applause was an Edison Standard by Thomas Chalmers of the song "Castles in the Air", and, although issued in 1909, is superior to later recordings by this artist.

The remainder of the evening was devoted to a programme of Blue Amberol records.

The next meeting was to take place on April 17th at 6-30 p.m.

Felix Sykes, Recording Secretary.

APRIL 1929

Our April Meeting, held on April 17th, was devoted to a programme of Blue Amberol Cylinders, arranged by Mr. A. Maskell, who brought his Edison Triumph Phonograph for the purpose of demonstrating his Special Spring Tension Reproducer fitted with an ivory diaphragm.

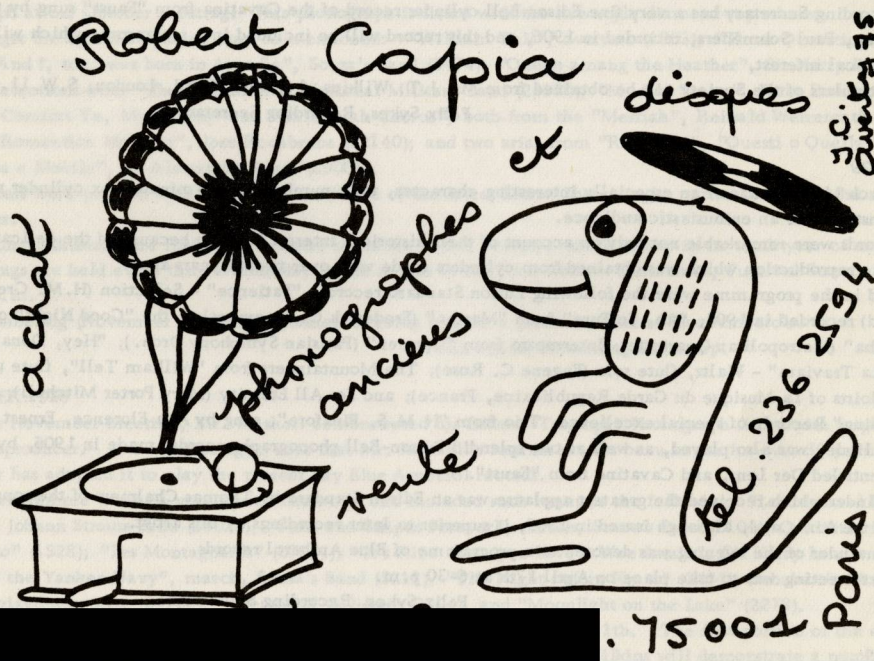
The volume of tone was exceptionally full, and the bass notes reproduced well.

Amongst the cylinders played should be mentioned:- Lutsiel Overture (1573); Muleteers of Malaga, Tom Kinniburgh (23018); Voi lo Spatete - "Cavalleria Rusticana", Marguerita Sylva (28183); Fantasia from "William Tell" (1730); O Kehr Zuruck - "Tannhauser", F. Egenieff (28154); Pastel Minuet, Tollefsen Trio (2237); Benediction of the Poignards, from "The Huguenots" (2543); Ah, Mon Fils, from "The Prophet", Maria Delna (28126); and four records from "H. M. S. Pinafore" (1890, 1891, 1892 & 1893).

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 15th, at the Food Reform Restaurant, Furnival Street, E. C.

Felix Sykes, Recording Secretary.

FRANK ANDREWS comments: "At the time of typing out the above reports, I have not investigated the possibility of obtaining reports of the meetings held during the eleventh year of our Society's existence (1929 - 1930), but it may be well to point out here, that during the ensuing twelve months, our Society, through the tide of events, passed from being a "contemporary" society into an historical society, for the Edison business, in America, ceased production of all types of commercial recording, and the members of our Society became bereft of acquiring any new recordings, all manufacture of phonographic machines and records having ceased much earlier in this country by all British manufacturers. In the forty-five years which have since elapsed, our Society, although still retaining a strong Edisonian image, especially as regards to machines and the later blue Amberol records, has, nevertheless, broadened its base to include all aspects of the acoustic and early electrical talking machine trade and industry. If we cannot claim to be the first talking machine society (although we sprang from the third society formed, way back in 1911!), we can, I suggest, claim to be the first talking machine society which has the preservation of machines, recordings and historical data as its "raison d'être".



WE HEAR FROM ROBERT CAPIA, WHOSE BUSINESS IS BUYING AND SELLING MACHINES, DISCS AND CYLINDERS, THAT HE HAS MOVED INTO NEW PREMISES AT [REDACTED] 75001 PARIS.

EDISON - OUR SOCIETY - THE NORTH LONDON SOCIETY - "DAMBEROLS"

by FRANK ANDREWS

In the July 1919 edition "The Sound Wave" there appeared this item:-

"The following is a copy of a letter from Orange (New Jersey, U.S.A.) recently addressed to Mr. Crawley:

From the Laboratory of Thomas A. Edison

Orange, New Jersey. May 22nd, 1919.

Dear Sir:

Your letter of April 28 has been received and shown to Mr. Edison. He wishes me to say that it is with much regret that he will be unable to consent to the use of his name in the title of your Society. For very important business reasons it has been found necessary to restrict the use of Mr. Edison's name to a much greater extent than heretofore.

Mr. Edison fully appreciates the sentiments of yourself and your fellow members in wishing to name the new Society for him, and also for extending the invitation to accept the office of President. For the reasons above given, Mr. Edison finds himself unable to accept this honour and trusts you will kindly excuse him.

Yours very truly

(signed) William H. Meadowcroft.

(Assistant to Mr. Edison)."

"Pertinax" of the "Sound Wave" commented - "In deference to Mr. Edison's wishes I understand it has been decided by a large majority of members to rename the Society 'The City of London Phonograph Society'".

"It is unfortunate that Mr. Edison has refused to sanction his name for the office of President of the New Society, as this will entail a change in the name of the Society which commenced under such favourable auspices. The bulk of the members are very keen Edison enthusiasts who might be counted upon to promote the Edison products to the fullest extent of their powers and opportunity. I am frequently hearing of people who have been greatly impressed by a first class Blue Amberol reproduction, so faithful to Nature, these people, introduced in recent years to the disc record, never having previously heard the cylinder, except under what are now obsolete conditions. The other important point about Blue Amberols, viz., that they practically never wear out, appeals to the average man very much".

The background to the foregoing items was the founding of our Society, in April 1919, by Edison enthusiasts belonging to the North London Gramophone and Phonograph Society. That was the inaugural meeting. On May 28th, the first General Meeting was held and the name of the Society it had been decided was to be "The London Edison Society". Mr. Edison's letter of refusal both of the use of his name and of the office of President, had been written six days earlier but had not yet been received by Mr. Crawley, the first Honorary Treasurer and Secretary of our Society.

"Pertinax", in "Sound Wave" of September, 1919 - "Mr. Crawley sends me word that Mr. Edison has, at length, consented to be a Patron of the City of London Phonograph Society. The following letter from Mr. Edison's assistant has been received by Mr. Crawley.

"Dear Sir: I have received your letter of July 9, and have brought to Mr. Edison's attention your desire for him to become a patron of the City of London Phonograph Society. Mr. Edison wishes me to convey to you his entire willingness to become a patron of the society, and appreciates the compliment.

Yours very truly,

(Signed) Wm. H. Meadowcroft, Assistant to Mr. Edison."

During this same September, 1919, "Pertinax" reported the following concerning the North London Society, from which ours had been inaugurated five months earlier.

"AN UNREHEARSED INCIDENT"

"I understand that a very unique unrehearsed incident took place at the August meeting of the North London Society which, in spite of the prevailing lassitude, due to the hot weather, made the blood stir for a passing half hour.

"It appears that a demonstration had been arranged to alternate reproductions of discs and cylinders, which turned out to be quite interesting, particularly as the same subject in one instance, which was an operatic trio,

was reproduced in both types of record. Everything went on merrily enough until the Secretary of the new City of London Phonograph Society, Mr. J.W. Crawley, brought forward a late recording of a Blue Amberol cylinder and a facsimile title by the same artiste on an Edison disc, to prove his assertion that the newer cylinders had not been recorded direct, but had been produced by mechanical duplication from the disc!

"A DIALECTICAL FRACAS!"

"This bold assertion immediately arrested the close attention of the critical audience present, who listened to the respective reproductions with keen interest. It was generally conceded that the disc reproduction was the better of the two. And I am not sure but that the meeting would not have accepted the truth of Mr. Crawley's assertion had not the President (of the North London Society) Mr. Henry Seymour, challenged that assertion by stating that he had heard nothing in the reproduction to justify what we considered was an enormous assumption, viz., that the cylinder, albeit inferior in result, was a mechanical or duplicated copy of the disc."

(Mr. Edison having refused the Presidency of our Society, but having become its patron, our Society had been without a President until this very September, when Mr. Adrian Sykes, B.Sc., consented to become our first President).

"Pertinax" continued - "Then the fur began to fly! For our friend, Mr. Crawley, who is a sturdy Yorkshireman and whose 'amour propre' had been touched, got up and defended his assertion with undaunted vigour.

"The spectacle of the President at one end of the hall and Mr. Crawley at the other, engaging, without any preliminary ceremony, in the sharpest of Socratic debates, while the regular entertainment was literally lost sight of, was a diversion quite out of the common and enough to make the mouth water of at least one person (my humble self) who was not fortunate enough to be present. But as I have before me the unabridged notes of Mr. Robinson (the Recording Secretary of the North London Society) who has been good enough to favour my request for details, I have at least something to be thankful for!"

"WHO SCORED?"

"I may as well confess that I do not feel sufficiently capable of hazarding an opinion as to the result. From the technical point of view, Mr. Seymour would likely have the best of it, but here the climax was capped by a statement of Mr. Crawley's that he had the admission of the fact (of duplication) in writing, from one of the employees in the Edison Laboratory. But Mr. Seymour doubted even that!"

"Asked for its production, Mr. Crawley said he could only do so at the expense of the said employee, but Mr. Seymour evidently regarded this as a sort of "secret dossier" and said that hearsay statements did not constitute evidence of facts for him!

"Mr. Crawley then challenged Mr. Seymour to prove that the said duplication could not be done, but this only brought the retort that it was not his (Mr. Seymour's) business to prove negatives but that it was Mr. Crawley's business to prove that it could and had been done, in this particular instance.

"The exciting controversy was ended by the meeting adopting Mr. Seymour's suggestion that the two records should be played together; be started at the same time, that the speeds of the machines be adjusted to secure the same tone of pitch in both and that note be taken whether or not one record finished before the other.

"A rather difficult test for a public meeting, methinks, and two attempts to reach a solution in this way were made, the general opinion being, after the second test, that the cylinder raced the disc. But on thinking it over, does this variation of time necessarily prove anything to the point? One would require to know the exact construction of the duplicating machine, it seems to me (The man was mistaken! - Frank Andrews) in order to make the time test effective. The fact that the Amberols are reproduced at the rate of 160 revolutions in the minute and the Edison discs at 80 leads an ordinary person with a mechanical turn of mind to conclude that in any such duplicating machine, as suggested, there must be two separate motions involved, which if not mathematically but only approximately related as 1 to 2, might easily account for any small variation in the playing length of the same record in the two forms, but which otherwise would not matter in the least. This, at any rate, might have proved an embarrassing poser to Mr. Seymour if Mr. Crawley had only thought of it."

Mr. Seymour wrote to "Pertinax" in October 1919 in the following terms: "Dear Pertinax: In your comments of a little publicly expressed difference of opinion between Mr. Crawley and myself regarding duplication of Edison cylinders from Edison discs, you question whether the time test, which I proposed, is effective, and suggest that the two speeds involved in the duplication of records from the disc to the cylinder form (corresponding to their respective speeds of reproduction) may exactly account for a small variation in the playing length of each, without

prejudice to the supposition that one may be a mechanical copy of the other. I join issue with you, as the lawyers say.

"I repeat, that any copy of a record from the original, in whatever manner made, will be precisely equal in playing length if the same pitch-tone is preserved in each. Any difference in the respective speeds of cylinder and disc in the process of duplication makes no difference whatever in the time taken in reproduction unless the pitch of one is made to differ from the other. The determination of equality in pitch (whether higher or lower than that in which it was originally recorded, is immaterial) gives the true relative speeds of the disc and cylinder in process of duplication. The wave markings of each record may, and doubtless will, vary in length, but that circumstance will have nothing to do with the question under consideration - having reference merely to the amount of space, or length of track, used up - the time occupied in using this up being always the same.

"The general method employed in duplication is that of the lever, one arm which carries a tracer or reproducing stylus, and the other a cutting or recording stylus, moved laterally by a feed device. By a suitably designed machine to accommodate and rotate the original record, as well as the blank on which the copy is to be made, these are placed in juxtaposition, with sufficient space between them to permit of the lever (made compound, to take up the eccentricities, in the motion of record and blank) operating between them, as well as giving it the necessary clearance for the traverse motion. It will be understood that this lever has its fulcrum at the end of an adjustable carrier fork, or rod, attached to the feed device.

"Now, as the record and blank rotate, (after the lever styli have been adjusted to contact with their respective surfaces), the depressions of the original record are traversed by the tracing stylus of the lever which motion imparts a corresponding motion to the opposite arm of the lever, and as this is furnished with a cutting stylus, its effect upon the blank is to produce a virtual facsimile of the depressions contained in the original record. How can there be any difference in time therefore, in a process which is essentially synchronous? That is an embarrassing poser, "Mr. Pertinax", which I put to you!

"In conclusion I may point out that any variation of time in the playing length of two records of same pitch would be conclusive proof that one record was not mechanically duplicated from the other, whilst the converse does not necessarily hold good."

THE CONVERSE by "Pertinax".

"So, according to Mr. Seymour, a variation of time in playing length of the two records, if reproduced exactly in the same pitch, would be conclusive proof that one was not a duplicate of the other! I take it, further, that what he implies by the converse of this proposition is, that synchronism in the playing length of two records, if reproduced exactly in the same pitch, would not be conclusive proof that one was a copy of the other!

"I suppose it is really within the range of possibility for a vocalist to sing the same song twice (once on a disc and once on a cylinder), on different occasions, in exactly the same length of time?"

"HEADS I WIN, TAILS YOU LOSE".

"Therefore, to be sure, Mr. Seymour, in suggesting this experiment, was bound to be right, whatever the result! I had not given him credit for so much astuteness."

A CRAWLEY EXPERIMENT.

"Pertinax" went on to say - "The following is an interesting account of a simple experiment, made by Mr. Crawley, in duplicating a 200 thread cylinder from an Edison disc."

"Dear Sir: Yorkshiremen are usually tenacious, I believe! I have taken this question of duplication a stage further by making a wax recording of the Edison disc played at the North London meeting, and it is practically identical with the Blue Amberol of the same title when each are played with a model H reproducer.

"This was made by placing the recording horn on the cylinder machine close by the horn of the Edison disc machine, the recorder put into action, then the disc machine started up to play.

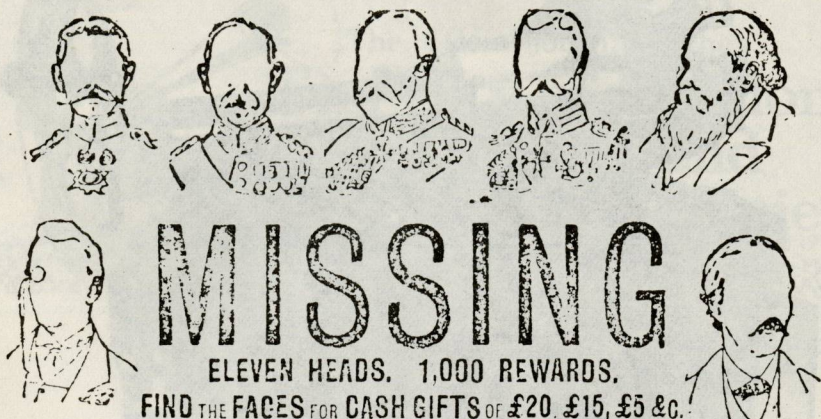
"In the later Blues, by listening carefully, one can hear what I assume is this disc machine repro' coming into action, and at the end of the record, a decrease in surface noise when the repro' is lifted.

"Here is another point. I have an Edison disc machine and can readily do what was not possible at the North London meeting, i.e. get the cylinder and disc machines to synchronise, playing records of the same title, - and the pitch is the same! I am prepared to demonstrate this to you if you are sceptical and sufficiently interested. In any case, if the members will allow, I propose to demonstrate at the City of London Phonograph Society meeting, on the 23rd inst., a Blue Amberol which I consider a duplicate of an Edison disc, and a wax recording of the same disc." (End of Mr. Crawley's letter).

"Pertinax" commented:- "I confess that I can hardly bring myself to believe that Mr. Edison would countenance the duplication of records by playing one machine to another. There may not be a wonderful difference between a Blue Amberol (later edition) and a wax copy, made in the manner done by Mr. Crawley, when reproduced with a model H repro', because this reproducer is utterly unsuited for Blue Amberols and was specially brought out for Wax Amberols only, and was very weak at that, for the larger model O was subsequently brought out to supersede it. Why, therefore, does Mr. Crawley so weaken his case by adopting the earliest and worst repro' of the series for the test?"

(This subject became a talking point, in general, within the subsequent issues of "Sound Wave". If enough members of the Society, say 25 at a minimum, are sufficiently interested and would care to read how the debate continued, I am willing to pursue the matter in their interest and will submit more material to the Editor. I personally have little interest in the phonograph or cylinder recordings, but as this debate was originated by our first secretary I feel that the debate should be continued a little further. I shall only carry on with this line of research if I receive at least twenty-five requests so to do - I cannot possibly reply personally to such correspondence!)

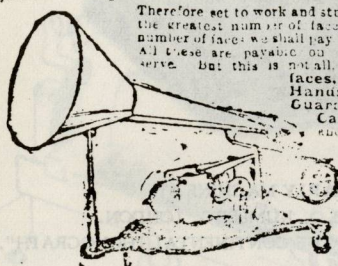
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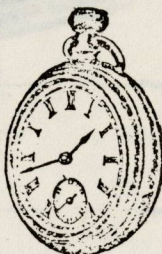
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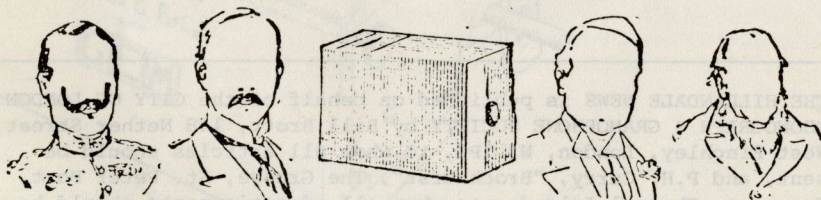


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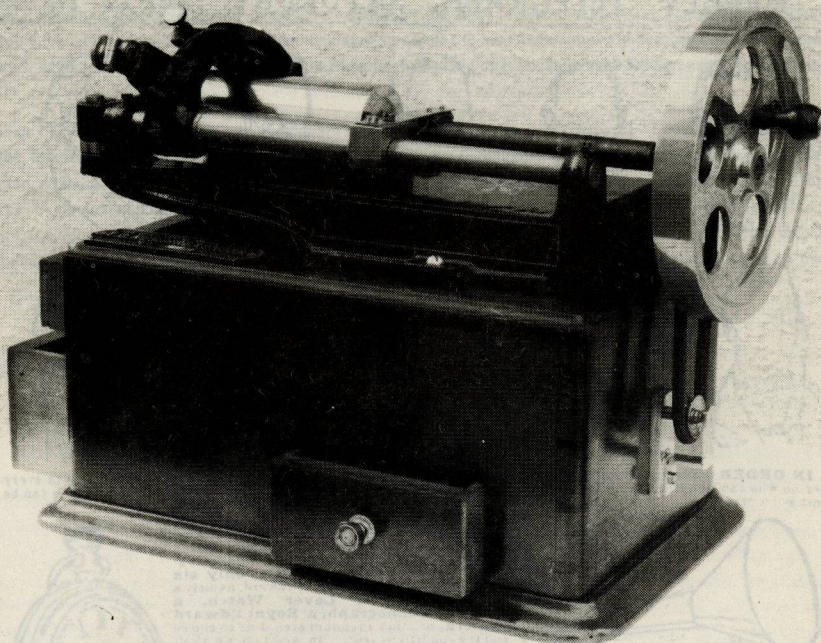
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THE HILLANDALE NEWS is published on behalf of the CITY OF LONDON
PHONOGRAPH & GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY by Bill Brott, [REDACTED]
West Finchley, London, N3 1PG, to whom all articles should be
sent, and P.H. Curry, [REDACTED] St. Peter Port,
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